


# Braille Monitor



DECEMBER, 1985

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



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# THE BRAILLE MONITOR

PUBLICATION OF THE  
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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## THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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KENNETH JERNIGAN, *President*

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Richard Edlund, *Treasurer*  
National Federation of the Blind  
1800 Johnson Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

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**THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION  
SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND—IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES**

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## SCHOLARSHIPS

In 1984 the National Federation of the Blind dramatically upped the number and size of the scholarships which it awards. The 1985 program was substantially increased. The same is true for the coming year.

In 1986 twenty-four outstanding blind students will receive scholarships from the Federation totaling \$65,000 in cash plus payment of their expenses to the National Federation of the Blind convention in Kansas City during late June and early July. Ten scholars will receive awards of \$1,800; ten scholars will receive awards of \$2,500; three scholars will receive awards of \$4,000; and one scholar will receive a \$10,000 scholarship.

The Federation's commitment to excellence and achievement is longstanding. We have made this commitment real through our many Federation programs and projects. No Federation program spotlights excellence and achievement more than our scholarship program, through which we honor and encourage America's distinguished blind students.

The Scholarship Committee for 1986 (their terms expire December 31, 1986) consist of the following nineteen people: Peggy Pinder, Iowa, Chairman; Steven Benson, Illinois; Jacquilyn Billey, Connecticut; Suzanne Bridges, South Carolina; Charles Brown, Virginia; Joanne Fernandes, Louisiana; Priscilla Ferris, Massachusetts; Sharon Gold, California; Charles Hallenbeck, Kansas; John Halverson, Virginia; Allen Harris, Michigan; David Hyde, Oregon; Gary

Mackenstadt, Washington; Ronald Matias, Indiana; Marc Maurer, Maryland; Homer Page, Colorado; Barbara Pierce, Ohio; Fred Schroeder, New Mexico; and Hazel Staley, North Carolina.

Our Scholarship Application Form (copy reproduced at the end of this article) consists of a single legal-sized page with printing on both sides. We are making an initial printing of forty thousand of these forms. They will be sent to every college and university in the country, every agency doing work with the blind, every Congressional office, every state president, and every member of the Scholarship Committee. They will also be sent to anyone requesting them. These are worthwhile scholarships, and they can be of real assistance to blind students. The news about our scholarship program should be disseminated as widely as possible. To receive forms or to obtain further information contact Peggy Pinder, Chairman, Grinnell State Bank Building, Second Floor, 814 - 4th Avenue, Grinnell, Iowa 50112; 515-236-3366. Forms can also be had by writing to: Scholarships, National Federation of the Blind, 1800 Johnson Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21230. Here is the scholarship form:

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### National Federation of the Blind 1986 Scholarship Program

Each year the National Federation of

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the Blind offers a broad array of scholarships. These scholarships are bestowed at the Federation's Annual Convention in early July and are given to blind persons pursuing or planning to pursue a full-time post-secondary course of training or study. We are currently offering the following:

**1. Ezra Davis Memorial Scholarship.** A scholarship, in the amount of \$10,000, has been endowed by Ezra Davis through his last will and testament and by the American Brotherhood for the Blind, a private agency which works to assist blind persons. Applicants for this scholarship must be legally blind and studying (or planning to study) at the post-secondary level. There is no restriction as to sex, graduate or undergraduate level, or field of study.

**2. National Federation of the Blind Merit Scholarships.** Nineteen of these scholarships (three in the amount of \$4,000; seven in the amount of \$2,500; and nine in the amount of \$1,800) will be given this year. Applicants for these scholarships must be legally blind and studying (or planning to study) at the post-secondary level. There is no restriction as to sex, graduate or undergraduate level, or field of study.

**3. Howard Brown Rickard Scholarship.** This scholarship in the amount of \$2,500 this year is awarded annually. Only students in certain fields of study are eligible because the donor of the scholarship wanted to encourage the blind to enter those fields. The scholarship was established by Thomas E. Rickard in honor of his father, Howard Brown Rickard. Any legally blind university student in the professions of law, medicine, engineering, architecture, or the natural sciences, including

undergraduates in these fields, is eligible to apply.

**4. Hermione Grant Calhoun Scholarships.** Two of these scholarships (each in the amount of \$2,500 this year) are awarded annually. Dr. Isabelle Grant established the Hermione Grant Calhoun Scholarships in memory of her daughter. These scholarships are awarded to legally blind female students for education at the college level.

**5. Melva T. Owen Memorial Scholarship.** This scholarship, in the amount of \$1,800 this year, is given annually. This scholarship is given in memory of Melva T. Owen, who was widely known and loved among the blind. She and her husband Charles Owen became acquainted with increasing numbers of blind people through their work in the "Voice-pondence" Club. In the words of Charles Owen, "There shall be no limitation as to field of study, except that it shall be directed towards attaining financial independence, and shall exclude religion and those seeking only to further their general or cultural education." Applicants must be legally blind.

**Criteria.** All scholarships administered by the Federation are awarded on the basis of academic excellence, service to the community, and financial need.

**Membership.** The National Federation of the Blind is an organization dedicated to creating opportunities for all blind persons. In furtherance of this goal, we have established our scholarship program. Recipients of Federation scholarships need not be members of the National Federation of the Blind.

**Deadline.** Applications for National Federation of the Blind scholarships must be submitted by March 31 of the

year in which the scholarship is to be awarded. Applications for scholarships will be accepted from July 1 through March 31 for scholarships to be awarded in July.

**Making Application.** To apply for National Federation of the Blind scholarships, complete and return the application on the reverse side of this sheet. Multiple applications are unnecessary. The Scholarship Committee will consider each applicant as a candidate for all scholarships for which he or she qualifies. Please provide all the information requested where applicable to you. Please attach to your application all the additional documents requested on the application. Send the completed application and attachments to: Miss Peggy Pinder, Chairman, National Federation of the Blind Scholarship Committee, Grinnell State Bank Building, Second Floor, 814 - 4th Avenue, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

**Reapplication.** In the past we have often awarded scholarships to persons who were applying for the second or third time. Applicants must resubmit their applications each year by March 31 to be considered for scholarships to be awarded in July. Persons who have previously applied and who have not been granted scholarships are encouraged to apply again.

**Winners.** Each year our Scholarship Committee reviews all applications and selects the top candidates as scholarship winners. These winners, the same number of winners as there are scholarships to award, will be notified of their selection as winners by June 1 and will be brought to the National Federation of the Blind convention in July at Federation expense. This is in addition

to the scholarship grants. Regardless of precisely which scholarship a winner receives, it is a mark of distinction and an honor to be chosen as a Federation scholarship winner. The winners are America's finest blind students.

The National Federation of the Blind Convention is the largest gathering of blind persons (more than 2,000) to occur anywhere in the nation each year. You will be able to meet with other blind students and exchange information and ideas, and you will also be able to meet and talk with blind people who are successfully functioning in your chosen profession or occupation. Federal officials, Congressmen and Senators, and the makers and distributors of new technology attend Federation Conventions. Above all, a broad cross section of the most active segment of the blind population of the United States will be present to discuss common problems, exchange information and ideas, and plan for concerted action. It is an interesting and exciting week.

**Awards.** The day before the Convention Banquet the Scholarship Committee will meet to determine which winners will receive which scholarships. The scholarship awards will be made during the Banquet.

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### National Federation of the Blind Scholarship Application Form

Please read carefully the reverse side of this form for instructions and an explanation of how the scholarship program works. This form may be photocopied, but only if the reverse side (containing rules of the scholarship

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program) is included.

To apply for a scholarship, complete this application form, providing all the requested information applicable to you and attaching all the requested documents. Mail the completed application and attachments or address any questions to: Miss Peggy Pinder, Chairman, National Federation of the Blind Scholarship Committee, Grinnell State Bank Building, Second Floor, 814 - 4th Avenue, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

DEADLINE: MARCH 31, 1986

Name (please include any maiden or other names by which you have been known):

Date of birth:

School address:

School phone number:

Home address:

Home phone number:

Institution being attended in the spring semester of 1986, with class standing (freshman, senior, third-year student, etc.):

Cumulative grade point average at this institution:

Institution to be attended in fall of 1986, with class standing. (Please provide this information by separate letter if you are admitted to your school of choice after submitting your completed application):

List all post-secondary institutions you

have attended with highest class standing attained and cumulative grade point average:

High school attended and cumulative grade point:

Vocational goal:

Awards and honors (attach list if necessary):

Community service (attach list if necessary):

Please attach the following documents to your completed application:

**1. Applicant's Letter.** Along with your application, send us a letter: What schools have you attended? What school do you plan to attend during the coming year? What honors have you achieved? What are you like as a person? What are your goals and aspirations? How will the scholarship help you?

## **2. Two Letters of Recommendation.**

**3. Transcripts.** Provide a current transcript from the institution you are attending as well as transcripts from all post-secondary institutions you have attended. If you have not yet attended an institution of higher learning or have not completed one year of study at such an institution, provide a high school transcript.

**4. Letter from Federation Officer.** Include a letter from a state officer of the National Federation of the Blind evidencing the fact that you have discussed your scholarship application with



that officer. It is preferable but not mandatory that you discuss your application with the State President of the Federation. If you do not have the name

and address of the Federation President in your state, we will provide it to you upon request.

## ISSUES AND TRENDS IN THE PRODUCTION AND USE OF BRAILLE

A major topic at the 1985 convention of the National Federation of the Blind was: Issues and Trends in the Production and Use of Braille. Much of the session on Thursday morning, July 4, was taken up with this item. Originally four people (three producers and the President of the National Association to Promote the Use of Braille) were scheduled to speak on the panel. However, Frank Kurt Cylke, Director of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, and T. V. Cranmer, Chairman of the Federation's Committee on Research and Development, (both of whom were to speak on other topics later Thursday morning) were asked to participate on the panel dealing with Braille. In the present article we print a major portion of the opening remarks of the four original panelists. President Jernigan began the discussion by saying:

"What we are about to consider is a topic that is as important as anything we're likely to deal with, because it involves not only mechanical and physical skills but also a whole way of

looking at blindness and blind people. I am not at all convinced that the notions people have about Braille are not involved with the notions they have about blindness. In fact, I am sure that they are. We must see that Braille gets emphasis—much more than it has had. And there must be action, not just talk—the kind of action that Federationists know how to take. Therefore, we are glad to feature prominently on our program the topic: Issues and Trends in the Production and Use of Braille. To lead it off, we have W. Benjamin Holmes, Executive Director of the Associated Services for the Blind of Philadelphia. Mr. Holmes then spoke in part as follows:

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The first issue that I would like to put before you is a very critical one—and that is the issue of what I call unused capacity. There are five major producers of press Braille in the United States. The American Printing House was first; Cloverbrook was second; National

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Braille Press was third; my group (The Associated Services for the Blind) was fourth; and Triformation is fifth.

My office is right next to the room where the plates are embossed. All day long I hear those plates thumping off as they are embossed. Around five, six, seven o'clock at night (when I'm working at my desk) I hear that machine shut down. The first thing that happens is that my heart catches, and I say: "The dots are dropping, they've got to adjust it, they're going to take it off, and we'll be shut down for a bit."

Then the silence continues, and I recognize that we have closed down for the day. I walk out into the press room, and the presses are silent. The five national producers have such capacity to produce Braille that we are only producing one quarter to one third of what we could do every single day. When our presses shut down, information that is your right to have is not coming to you. And those presses shut down every day between five p.m. and eight o'clock the next morning. They could run all night. What I'm saying to you is that in the last five to ten years (but mostly in the last five years) through computerization our capacity to produce Braille has grown by leaps and bounds. Yet to this day we are only producing annually a third to a quarter of what we could be producing. It's a critical issue. It's a very critical issue.

The second critical issue I would put before you: I want to say thank God for the Library of Congress. I really believe this. Its distribution is critical. It's a very critical distribution system. So remember I said thank God for the Library of Congress.

Now, I want to say something else. When we produce a book in Braille, we only produce (listen to this) sixty to seventy copies of that book. And those copies are sent out to the libraries of the nation. This is a critical issue. For each of the five producers, our costs are up front: computerization, proofreading, zinc plates. When I get to printing (putting the paper into the printer) believe it or not, on a high speed printer I can produce five hundred to a thousand pages almost as quickly as fifty to sixty pages.

So additional copies of that book which you could buy are not run. My contract and the contract of all producers with the government says that we have to sell to you at the same price that we sell to the government. Well, our up-front costs are the computer. Our up-front costs are proofreading and zinc plates. When I get out in that production room, I could run one, two, three, five hundred more copies at relatively much smaller costs. That's the second issue that I would put before you.

The third one is that we must have an alternative form of distribution. The Library of Congress is one form. We can no longer depend upon government as the major form of distribution. As good a job as they've done, they've done a miserable job overall. I'm not criticizing in any way a speaker who will appear later this morning [He refers to Frank Kurt Cylke, head of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped] because he's done one of the best jobs in the nation. But the system is not working.

The fourth issue: The changes that have occurred in the last five to ten

years are nothing compared to the changes that are going to occur in the next five to ten years. I believe that I will be the last chief executive officer of our Braille production unit who will hear embossing machines pounding out plates or will hear presses printing Braille. I believe I will be the last. Because I believe what's going to happen in three, five, seven, nine years (I don't know how long) is that our computers will print electronic tape. This electronic tape will be sent to the libraries and to others. That tape, as it goes into the library, will have an embossing device in the library, and you will have Braille on demand—and you have had a right to have Braille on demand. Braille on demand means that you can get what you want yourself when you want it—when you need it—and at a price that you are able to afford.

Now, let me close by drawing an analogy. What's going to happen in Braille production is already happening in the radio reading services. This morning, at five o'clock, a signal went out from New York City. That signal hit the satellite. That satellite deflected it to Philadelphia. That signal, which started in New York, automatically turned on our transmitter in our radio reading services and the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal were read over the air this morning in Philadelphia before any of my employees went to work—even the crew that works on the Fourth of July, because we cover holidays and weekends.

My point is that the people of Philadelphia this morning who wanted to hear the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal had to do one thing in their homes: turn on the switch. And the

whole thing was automated from five o'clock until ten o'clock. When they wanted to stop hearing the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal they turned off the switch. That's going to happen in Braille, and it's about time.

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President Jernigan said: "You've given us some things to think about, and we'll want to discuss them later. We have heard from Mr. Holmes. Now, we want to hear from Mr. William M. Raeder, Managing Director of the National Braille Press, Inc., of Boston, Massachusetts. Interesting things have been going on at the National Braille Press, as well as at the Philadelphia operation. Mr. Raeder, we are pleased to hear from you."

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Mr. Raeder spoke in part as follows:

I want to direct my comments this morning to the subjects of Braille, consumerism, and technology; and I'd like to start by telling you a case study of a woman who works for a large organization in Washington. To carry out the functions of her job, she requires information—information which is specific to the organization for which she works, and specific to the job which she's supposed to be carrying out. Now, that information is generated in the computer of her organization. It is revised frequently, and she needs it in Braille.

So, about twice a month that organization sends to the National Braille Press a computer tape. It takes us twenty minutes to put that tape on our computer

system and out the other end. Twenty minutes later comes about fifty pages of Braille ready for binding and shipping back to her. So we have developed what we call a "Jiffy Braille Service"—twenty-four hour turnaround in this particular case for highly important job related Braille materials.

So the key issue that I address this morning is bringing the computer technology to bear to meet the individual—the specific needs, the special needs, of blind people for job related materials in Braille. Now, we've already seen (as Mr. Holmes described) how technology has increased our Braille production capacity for books and magazines over the last five or ten years. In the last ten years the National Braille Press has increased its transcription capacity by sevenfold for the production of books and magazines. And the industry as a whole has more than doubled—so much that whereas ten years ago the industry was unable to meet the demands placed upon it for books and magazines, now there is excess capacity for Braille transcription for general reading materials—books and magazines. This has happened to such an extent that there is increased competition for the work of producing books and magazines, as described in the Braille Monitor article a few months ago, where we read that a substantial amount of work was transferred from one agency to another.

Now, does that competition provide us with an important issue? Well, yes it does; but it's not the interesting issue for us this morning when we're addressing consumerism. The interesting thing about that is that the Associated Services for the Blind, through technology, was able significantly to

increase their capacity to take on an additional amount of work—and they were only able to do it by applying computer technology and the use of scanners. So the issue, again, that I want to face here is to bring that technology to meet the individual needs—the specific needs of blind people for job related information in Braille.

There are several side issues here. The first one, of course, is that Braille producers (such as the National Braille Press) should be able to receive information for transcription on these computer tapes or on floppy disks. That requires additional research and development work because of the many configurations available on disk format and the many different formats that a Braille producer would receive. So additional research and development effort and money must be expended. That's side issue (or subissue) number one.

Subissue number two is to produce the Braille for distribution on paperless Braille devices. We have seen the Internal Revenue Service provide leadership in this by hiring blind people and giving them jobs as taxpayer service representatives and in recent years giving them VersaBraille machines with fast electronic look-up capability so that they can search out the information that they need in a hurry—job related specific information important to their individual jobs.

Another issue is the ability of you people in your organization (such as your state affiliates) to set up your own Braille production units. It only costs seven to eight thousand dollars these days to buy, say, an IBM PC, a Duxbury Translator, a Personal Brailier



from Triformation or from Visualtek—and, by gosh, you're in business. You've got your small Braille production house right in your own shop. So, decentralization of Braille production to meet these individual needs is the next subissue that I wish to address—decentralization from the five major Braille production houses that Mr. Holmes mentioned.

The final burning issue is who's going to pay for it all? Let me give you another brief case study. There's a young man who works in a large corporation in the Boston area as a programmer, and he needed a substantial amount of computer manual material put into Braille. They sent us at the National Braille Press a computer tape with the required information in computer form. It took us a significant amount of time, but we finally produced about 750 pages of Braille material specific to that individual's job situation. Now, it cost us quite a bit of money, and we were unable to do it for the price that we would like to charge—ten cents a page. So the issue is: Who pays for it? Do we charge the blind person and place a burden upon the individual we're trying to serve? I don't think so. Do we charge the corporation? Many people say, "Well, the corporation is wealthy. They can afford this." Perhaps they can, but the issue is do we want to burden the corporation? Do we want to reward them for their having hired blind people with a bill to support that effort? Now, many corporations are willing to pay and will do so gladly—but many won't. The issue, then, is who's going to pay for it? There are two things that have to be paid for. One is the actual transcription into

Braille, and the other is the continuing research and development to carry forward the application of this technology to meet the individual's specific needs. That's what consumerism is—and it's through that activity (the continuing development and the continuing efforts of you and of the Braille producers) to bring this forward such that in the years to come you folks will have the individualized Braille needs that you deserve and need and that are important to you as you develop more and more independent, responsible, productive positions in society.

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President Jernigan next introduced Dr. Carson Y. Nolan, President of the American Printing House for the Blind. Dr. Nolan spoke as follows:

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My remarks this morning are going to be complementary to those of Mr. Holmes and Mr. Raeder, deal with some trends that we've seen in the blind student population, talk about our efforts at the Printing House to improve Braille instruction, and a little bit about production.

First, student trends. As many of you know, each January we make a census of legally blind students enrolled in formal education programs below college level in this country. Among the data that we gather are the numbers of these students who read Braille, who read large type, or who are essentially non-readers.

Last January there were 44,313 such students in this country. However, in

January of 1966 we only registered 19,291 such students—so the number is growing. But the point I want to make is the shifts that have occurred in the number of Braille readers. In 1966 (when we had 19,000 students) 8,821 (or 46%) of those students read Braille. In 1981 we registered over 36,000 students. However, the number of Braille readers had dropped to 5,588 (or 15%) of the total—down from 46% to 15%.

Since that time I am happy to say the absolute number of Braille readers registered among our student population has grown. In 1984 7,105 Braille readers were registered—an increase of 27% over the number registered in 1981. So this is a good sign for all of us who are interested in Braille and its future. We were concerned about the diminishing number of Braille readers in the fifties and sixties; and we felt that a way that we could preserve interest in Braille was to improve the variety and quality of materials available to teach this important subject in the schools.

We had indicated research on Braille reading as early as 1952 and have continuously carried out research on some aspects of Braille reading since that time. By 1970 we felt that, by taking what we had learned on our own and combining it with other research information, we were in a position to use these data to create meaningful instructional materials. Our efforts in this area are still under way and, when finished, will provide an array of Braille reading materials comparable to those available to sighted children. These products include a reading readiness program, a Braille reading curriculum for the primary grades, a library

series to accompany this program, a Braille spelling and writing program, a Braille reading proficiency test, Braille code recognition materials, and a Braille reading program for adventitiously blinded adults.

Our readiness program is aimed at preschool and kindergarten students and includes materials developed for the sensory, motor, tactile, perceptual, and conceptual areas. These materials are currently being revised and reconstituted into eighty lessons that will make them much simpler for teachers to utilize. The primary Braille reading program called "Patterns" has been well received throughout the English-speaking world. It has been designed to deal specifically with problems encountered in learning to read Braille. It has six levels: readiness, preprimer, primer, first reader, second reader, and third reader. Each level consists of a teacher's edition, the text for pupils, work sheets, and a post test to measure pupils' proficiency. We have bolstered this with the "Pattern" library series, which was designed to give practice in reading as children study the curriculum. It's designed to reinforce the reading skills as they are taught in "Patterns." This series consists of twenty-three to twenty-seven books especially developed for each of the five levels, preprimer through third reader. The books are accompanied by notes for teachers. (Actually they can be used with any reading curriculum.)

Our sequel to "Patterns" is a Braille language program, development of which started this January and will continue through 1990. It'll be used in parallel with "Patterns" and will stress the development of spelling skills and

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knowledge of English grammar and usage, including Braille writing instruction. It will consist of a readiness level and three additional levels corresponding to grades one through three. Each level will have teacher and student materials.

Work is about half complete on a Braille instructional program to teach Braille reading to persons who have lost their vision after initially learning to read print. Called "Read Again," this program will consist of two parts. The first will teach tactile discrimination skills and introduce Braille Grade I. The second part will teach Grade II. We have Braille code recognition materials designed to increase the speed and accuracy with which people recognize the Braille cells and signs.

The final component of our Braille reading program is a brand new diagnostic test of Grade II Braille. This test will provide scores for numbers and types of reading areas and for reading rates. It's accompanied by an observational checklist for teachers to record Braille reading characteristics. It should be very useful in the design of remedial reading instruction.

We feel this comprehensive set of materials, developed by our Department of Educational Research, should contribute significantly to maintaining Braille as a popular reading medium. Next summer we're going to start something new in conjunction with the University of Louisville. We are going to hold workshops and seminars for college credit, and one of these will deal with teaching teachers how to use our materials to teach students to read Braille. Teacher trainers, as well, can receive this instruction. We hope not only to conduct these classes here but

to conduct them in other schools as well.

I won't dwell on the technological aspects. Mr. Raeder and Mr. Holmes have mentioned them, and our activities here in the development of improved technology have paralleled theirs. I might mention to you that last year we developed the capability for mass production of VersaBraille tapes, and over the winter we have produced a large number of publications in this form under contract. We're going to explore the educational market for VersaBraille tapes. I don't know what it is, but we are working among the people who are our trustees in the states to try to develop this market and define it; and this fall, at our annual meeting, part of our program will deal with the application of VersaBraille tapes in education in the schools.

I might do a bit of predicting. My colleagues and I at the Printing House for the Blind are optimistic about the future of Braille. We believe the future will see increased use of it. The strong and growing advocacy of its use among consumer and parent groups cannot be denied. The broad range of specifically designed training materials for blind children and adults that I mentioned is going to increase instructional efficiency, and it's going to make learning easier. Users are going to attain higher levels of skill with the same amount of instruction. Training will be available to teachers (as I mentioned) to teach these things. We believe that Braille production costs will be contained and, hopefully, reduced. Technological advances will create a trend in this direction. Increased competition will play a big

role. Utilization of microcomputers for Braille translation, using input by volunteer typists, is going to play a significant role. We believe the kinds and varieties of materials available to the Braille consumer will continue to increase. Increased output by volunteers, coupled with improved short run printing technology, will contribute significantly. Computerized access to the variety of print data available in electronic form is really going to blossom. And we think that this will be a big source of materials in the future. We think the future for Braille is bright.

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The next to speak was Mrs. Betty Niceley—President of the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky, newly-elected member of the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind, and President of the National Association to Promote the Use of Braille. In introducing her, President Jernigan said:

"The establishment of the National Association to Promote the Use of Braille symbolizes our determination to increase the amount of Braille in this country and our determination that Braille will receive greater emphasis. It also symbolizes our determination to see that those who purport to teach Braille will know something about it and truly be able to teach it."

Betty Niceley then spoke in part as follows:

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Truly, history repeats itself, and

we're eternally reminded that necessity is the mother of invention. Louis Braille proved this long ago when the loss of vision dictated a need for communication. Dr. tenBroek proved it forty-five years ago when his foresight told him that if blind people wanted a job well done, nine times out of ten they'd have to do it themselves. And we the blind have proved it because where we once had one major producer of Braille, we now have five.

We are proving again here today because the largest organization of blind people in the world has on its agenda the directors of three of these producing agencies. How can anyone say that there is a lessening demand for Braille. This brings me to one of my favorite statements, and it comes from the Bible. It says: "This, too, shall pass." As the old man reading the Bible said, "Nothing came to stay," and we've got to prove that.

Here are some of the things that we believe must be changed. First of all, the demand for Braille is there, and must be met. Secondly: I, too, thank God for the Library of Congress; but I, like Mr. Holmes, recognize its shortcomings—and it is my own personal belief that the greatest shortcoming the Library of Congress has is in the fact that it does not clearly recognize this need and is not willing to put anything like the amount of money into meeting the need that it puts into recorded materials. I believe that the amount of money put into materials for the blind should be more equally divided so that Braille readers get a chance to come in as well as those reading recorded materials.

I believe that the means of keeping

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statistics must change. Our regional libraries, for example, when they give the facts and figures about how many people are reading recorded material and how many people are reading Braille material, have it divided up; and from what I can find out, it's like 5,000 readers are being served by our library, 300 of those readers prefer Braille. Well, what kind of record keeping is that? Of those 5,000 readers, probably about 4,000 read Braille. But nobody takes that into account. The only people who are counted are the ones who prefer Braille.

These are some of the things that we've got to work with on a state by state basis. Last year we registered a complaint with Mr. Cylke, and I again register that same complaint today. It is this: Our own regional library in the state of Kentucky (even though it distributes Braille) goes by the name of the Talking Book Library. When we raised this question last year, Mr. Cylke wasn't aware that anyone was doing that. We pointed out to him that the library was, and the material is, still being sent out with all headings being

the Talking Book Library. Now, if you're going to send out this kind of propaganda, how is anyone going to demand Braille if he or she isn't aware that Braille is at the library?

Another thing must be changed. Our children must grow up with Braille. Any institution that is set up to educate the blind should make it a requirement in the curriculum that all students attending should learn Braille. If the visual problem is such that a child needs to go to a school for the blind, he or she should be taught Braille. There should be no question about it.

We must see that those people who teach in our school systems are properly prepared to teach our children Braille. We have to learn to stop referring to the lack of demand for Braille. We've got to consider the fact of how the need is going to be met. We've got to stop thinking of change as a threat.

It is a truism that without change there can be no progress. We must remind producers of Braille that when we suggest a change, it is because we feel it will meet a need—not because we intend to threaten them.

## OF PROCESSING ALMONDS AND PRACTICING LAW

October 14, 1985

Roger Baccigaluppi, President  
California Almond Growers Exchange  
Blue Diamond  
Sacramento, California

Dear Mr. Baccigaluppi:

I am in receipt of an exchange of correspondence between Sharon Gold, President of the National Federation of the Blind of California, and you. The letter from Sharon Gold describes an incident which took place at a food

processing plant which you operate. A blind woman with a dog guide was refused the opportunity to participate in a tour of your food processing plant. The letter from Ms. Gold points out that the refusal of your company to permit this blind lady to participate in the tour is a violation of California law. Ms. Gold could have threatened you with legal action. She might have demanded that the blind lady receive monetary compensation for her injuries. She could have informed you that this matter would be brought to the attention of the public through public demonstrations. She could have subjected your behavior to public examination through the newspaper. Rather than take any of these actions, Ms. Gold requested an apology. Her letter is both stern and understanding. Let me remind you of what it says:

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Sacramento, California  
August 20, 1985

Roger Baccigaluppi, President  
California Almond Growers Exchange  
Sacramento, California

Dear Mr. Baccigaluppi:

It has come to my attention that on Friday, August 1, 1985, at approximately 10:30 a.m., a blind lady using a dog guide, Marjorie Ruppel of Sacramento, was excluded from participating in your plant tour. According to a large sign posted in your foyer and your brochure "Sacramento's Newest Historical Landmark: International Visitors Center and Almond Plaza," "Blue Diamond Welcomes Everyone to Tour Our Plant."

Exclusion of a blind person from a tour of your plant solely because she is blind and is accompanied by a dog guide is discriminatory and is in violation of the California Statutes. Please be advised that Section 54.1 of the California Civil Code provides that all blind persons "shall be entitled to full and equal access, as other members of the general public, to all...places to which the public is invited..." and that Section 54.2 of this same Code guarantees such blind persons "shall have the right to be accompanied by a guide dog..." Failure to allow blind persons accompanied by a dog guide on your plant tours is a violation of California law. I enclose herewith a copy of the California White Cane Law, which sets forth these and other statutes relevant to the blind and disabled.

Mrs. Ruppel came to your plant as an adult supervisor for a group of young school children who were taking an educational field trip as arranged by the Sacramento City Schools and its Freeport Elementary School. Mrs. Ruppel was to participate in the field trip by supervising the children throughout the tour. Your interference with Mrs. Ruppel's duties caused a disruption to the entire field trip. Further, the confrontation of Mrs. Ruppel by your employees before the children she was to supervise and her immediate supervisor, Larry Lee from the Fruitridge Elementary School, was outrageous and demeaning and caused Mrs. Ruppel much embarrassment and humiliation. Such behavior on the part of your employees toward a member of the public, who happens to be blind and uses a dog guide, is both unfortunate and unwarranted.

Since Blue Diamond is a part of the

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National Register of Historical Places and thus expects to and does serve the public by means of active invitation and recruitment, the National Federation of the Blind of California respectfully requests that you instruct your employees that blind persons who use dog guides should be welcome as other members of the public and afforded equal treatment and courtesy while in the International Visitors Center and Almond Plaza. As evidence of your intention to exercise a good faith effort to operate within the California law, I hereby request that you send a letter of apology to Marjorie Ruppel, c/o National Federation of the Blind of California, at the above address.

The National Federation of the Blind of California wishes to resolve this matter amicably. Therefore, your attention to the above described situation and your prompt reply will be appreciated. Thank you.

Very truly yours,  
Sharon Gold, President  
National Federation of the Blind  
of California

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Mr. Baccigaluppi, your letter of response to Sharon Gold is truly an astonishing piece of writing. Rather than honestly admit your mistake and make some effort to assure that future discrimination will not occur, you reply that you regret the incident. However, you state that you are proud of the behavior of your employees and that you have commended them for their action. You then make an attempt to justify your behavior by referring to certain laws

and administrative regulations. According to your letter, these laws and regulations prohibit you from permitting any animals in your food processing plant. Therefore, again according to your letter, the blind lady with the dog guide could not accompany the tour. Compare the tone of your remarks to those of Sharon Gold's. Under date of September 9, 1985, you say:

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This will acknowledge your letter of August 20, 1985...requesting that I send a letter of apology to Mrs. Marjorie Ruppel in connection with the incident that occurred on Friday, August 16, 1985. While I am sorry this whole incident occurred, I am not in a position to apologize for the actions of any of our employees. As a matter of fact, I have complimented the employees involved because of the care, consideration, and concern they used in speaking with Mrs. Ruppel and in trying to do what was right for Mrs. Ruppel but at the same time not violating any laws under which we operate. Mrs. Ruppel was offered a private tour of our plant and was dealt with in a most courteous and considerate manner. Your letter relies on the California Civil Code Section 54.1(a) which generally provides that "blind persons, visually handicapped persons, deaf persons, and other physically disabled persons" are entitled to "full and equal access as other members of the general public" to public facilities and accommodations including "places to which the general public is invited." Assuming, without concluding, the exchange plant is such a place to which the public is invited...Ms. Gold and Mrs. Ruppel are

apparently unaware of the statutory limitations under Section 54.1(a) which provides that such equal access is "subject...to the conditions and limitations established by law or state or federal regulations and applicable alike to all persons."

In the case of Mrs. Ruppel, the limitations referred to in Section 54.1(a) are found under both California Health and Safety Code Section 28282.5 (approved sanitation provision under Chapter 7 Division 22) and 21 C.F.R. 110.37 (a federal food and drug administration regulation relating to current good manufacturing practice in manufacturing, processing, packing, or holding human food). Both prohibit the Exchange from allowing animals in its processing plants and are applicable to all persons. Copies of the applicable sections of these laws are attached.

If I might briefly digress into philosophy of the law, I believe it is important for people to understand that there are few if any rights which are absolute in the sense that they are not subject to some limitations. Thus, even with regard to the most legally protected areas of personal freedom, such as that of free speech founded in the First Amendment, Justice Holmes, in one of his opinions, concisely and eloquently observed that no person has the right to shout fire in a crowded theater. Similarly, the California legislature in enacting California Civil Code Section 54.1 qualified the equal access right by limitations under other California or federal law.

There is no question that blind persons that use guide dogs are as welcome as other members of the public and treated courteously while they are in

our International Visitors Center and our Almond Plaza. With regard to touring portions of our facilities where food is being processed, we must abide by local, state, and federal laws dealing with the handling and preparation of foods.

I sincerely hope that everyone involved in this incident has learned something from it. I know we have.

Sincerely,  
Roger Baccigaluppi

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Let me begin with the end of your letter. You say that you hope all involved have learned from this incident. You add that you know you have. Either this sentiment is included in your letter because you are of an open mind and willing to learn from this situation, or it is merely a pious platitude. If it is merely a pious platitude, then your purpose for including it in the letter must have been to convey the impression that you are reasonable, but Sharon Gold and the blind person with the dog guide who wished to tour your plant are not. I shall not speculate on your motive. I accept your letter at face value. In search of learning and new understanding, I have read Sharon Gold's letter, your response, the rules and regulations you included in your letter, and other pertinent material. Again, in the spirit of learning and understanding, I offer you the following analysis.

A well known doctrine of American jurisprudence is the "four corners rule." This rule asserts that all statements in a document should be given



effect if this can be done without violating the spirit of the document. Another rubric of legislative interpretation states that the general is modified by the specific. Furthermore, laws which are adopted today modify laws which have been adopted previously unless they contain specific language which states that they are not intended to modify earlier legislation. Therefore, the law enacted in 1985 will modify a law enacted in 1981 unless it states that it does not.

What do these rules of statutory construction have to do with the present case? Sharon Gold told you that your behavior in denying a blind person the opportunity to tour your facility violated Section 54.1 of the California Civil Code. You responded that she was mistaken. You assert that there is a statutory limitation under California Civil Code Section 54.1(a) which authorizes you to deny blind persons accompanied by dog guides the opportunity to visit your plant on the same terms and conditions as others. This statutory limitation says that equal access is subject...to conditions and limitations established by law or state or federal regulations and applicable alike to all persons. You then include a portion of the California Health and Safety Code and certain federal regulations. These materials state that food processing facilities may not permit animals inside the plant except those necessary for the completion of the processing of the food. The meaning of these regulations is made clear by the context. It is intended that processing plants shall be operated in such a way that food is not contaminated by animals or vermin. The regulations that you

sent contain only one exception to the rule, that no animal may be permitted in a food processing plant except those essential for the processing of the food. This exception is dogs—specifically, dogs used by uniformed employees of private patrol operators and private patrolmen. You say that this literally means that you are prohibited by law from permitting a blind person accompanied by a dog guide from entering your plant.

Consider the literal meaning of the statute you yourself use. No animals shall be permitted to enter a food processing plant except those essential to the manufacture of the food. What animals are essential to that process? If meat is to be included in the prepared food, then the animals which supply that meat are essential. The only other animals which might be permitted in the plant are those needed to operate the machinery inside the plant. Human creatures are animals. The definition in the Webster's dictionary makes this clear. Those persons essential to the operation of the plant are permitted to enter it, but no others. You have violated the rule by permitting the tour of your plant which Ms. Ruppel intended to accompany. You have violated this rule again when you offered Ms. Ruppel a private tour. She was not essential to the preparation of the food in your food processing plant. Yet, you do not object to her on a private tour. Indeed, you take hundreds of people per year through your food processing facility. Apparently, you do not mean to take the law literally. You intend to interpret it to permit human beings (animals) to enter your plant at any time which is convenient to you.

Clearly, it is reasonable to interpret this law to permit certain animals to go through the plant.

The section of the Health and Safety Code upon which you have placed such faith was adopted in 1951 and amended in 1971. It is a general statute intended to insure that food preparation plants are operated in a hygienic manner. Section 54.1 of the Civil Code (one of the provisions of the White Cane Law) was adopted in 1968—seventeen years later. The Health and Safety Code is a general law. The White Cane Law is specific. The provisions of the White Cane Law must be understood as an addition to and an interpretation of the Health and Safety Code and the federal regulations. This is made abundantly clear by California Code Section 27802(g)(2)—a section of the code with which you are apparently unfamiliar. Paragraph 1 of subsection g provides that animals may not be permitted in food processing areas. Paragraph 2 states: "paragraph 1 does not prohibit the presence in any room where food is served to the public, guests, or patrons of a guide dog, signal dog, or service dog as defined by Section 54.1 of the Civil Code accompanied by a totally or partially blind person, deaf person, person whose hearing is impaired, or handicapped persons, or persons licensed to train guide dogs for the blind..." Paragraph 5 of this section further states "(5) the dogs described in paragraphs 2 and 3 shall be excluded from food preparation and utensil washing areas." This section of the law was added in 1984. The general prohibition against having animals in food preparation areas must then be interpreted in the light of the 1984 amendments to the

Health and Safety Code. In other words, animals are prohibited from contaminating food. They are not prohibited from being in areas used by the public for public tours. Because the specific modifies the general, because laws adopted earlier are modified by amendment, and because the "four corners rule" requires all sections of the code to be interpreted together, Section 54.1 requires you to permit blind persons accompanied by dog guides to tour your facility along with the sighted. For a more detailed discussion of statutory interpretation I refer you to SUTHERLAND ON STATUTORY INTERPRETATION.

Finally, I should point out that the federal government has considered the question of blind persons accompanied by dog guides in circumstances far more likely to involve the public health than public tour areas of a food processing plant. Should blind persons accompanied by dog guides be permitted to take them into hospitals? This is the question considered and decided by the Office of Civil Rights of the Federal Department of Health and Human Services. In a ruling issued on May 6, 1983, that agency found "we have concluded that St. Francis Hospital has discriminated against blind and visually impaired persons on the basis of their handicap by establishing criteria or procedures which limit blind or visually-impaired persons from enjoying the same rights and privileges as others because they have chosen dog guides as auxiliary aids, a violation of 45 C.F.R. Section 84.4(b)(4)(i)....

"Our office's policy which interprets 45 C.F.R. Section 84.4(b)(4)(i) of the regulation is quoted below:

"The basic assumption is that blind

or visually-impaired persons must be permitted to use dog guides in all situations except where it can be clearly shown that the presence or use of a dog guide would pose a significant health risk or where a dog's behavior is disruptive. A finding of violation can be made where a recipient has a blanket policy of exclusion, or excludes any individual dog guide, without a clear showing that the presence of the dog guide poses a significant health risk or disruption to the recipient's program.'

"A dog guide is an auxiliary aid that many blind or visually-impaired persons use to permit them independent mobility. Any refusal to admit a visually impaired person to a facility because that person is using a dog guide is, in effect, prohibiting the use of an auxiliary aid.... What is at issue is the establishment of criteria or procedures that limit blind or visually-impaired persons from enjoying the same rights and privileges as others because they have chosen dog guides as auxiliary aids.

"Hospitals, nursing homes, or any other health or human services agencies that permit, invite, and regularly encourage visitors to their programs may not establish a policy that, in general, prohibits the use of auxiliary aids by handicapped visitors unless it can be shown that the use of the auxiliary aid would endanger others or prevent them from benefiting from the recipient's program.

"Unless there is evidence that the presence or use of a dog guide would pose a significant health risk or that the dog's behavior would be disruptive to the recipient's program, the assumption should be made that the groomed and well-behaved dog guide

should be permitted to accompany its owner wherever that person goes."

The Department of Health and Human Services and California Law are in accord that blind persons must be permitted to use dog guides in traveling to places where the public is generally invited. Unless you were planning to have the tour go to places where the dog guide might handle the food or place its paws on the food preparation surfaces, it is most unlikely that you will be able to demonstrate a significant health risk. Therefore, your exclusion of Mrs. Ruppel with her dog guide is discriminatory. If the dog guide used by Mrs. Ruppel would have the opportunity to lick the food, or otherwise get its paws on some of the substances you plan to sell, then it is highly questionable whether the tour members themselves maintain a sanitary distance from the food. Mrs. Ruppel was accompanying a tour of children. She intended to help insure that the children remain orderly. Children (often as frequently as adults) are tempted to touch and handle food. If the dog guide could get at it, so could the children—not to mention the adults.

In your letter, you say that you hope you have learned something. Discrimination comes with all kinds of packaging. It is rare that a person says to himself "today I plan to discriminate against the blind." There is always some reason, some purpose. In the minds of those who are discriminating, the purposes are always important and the reasons are always valid. When the hotel operator says that he only has rooms on the second floor and cannot rent one to a blind person, he thinks his reason for discriminating is valid.

Nevertheless, regardless of the good intentions, the blind person doesn't get the room. In the situation at hand, Mrs. Ruppel is denied an opportunity. She cannot accompany the tour and discharge her responsibility. She cannot provide the assistance which she went to provide. She is limited and unreason-

ably kept out. Such treatment is discrimination. Surely the Almond Plaza will not continue this discriminatory practice.

Very truly yours,  
Marc Maurer

### ANOTHER ARREST IN THE AIRLINES MADNESS

Recently Gary Mackenstadt, President of the National Federation of the Blind of Washington, attended a seminar at the National Center for the Blind in Baltimore. His wife Denise also attended the seminar. As the Mackenstadts were returning home to Seattle, Gary was arrested in Chicago for refusing to move from the seat which airline personnel had assigned him.

Later, a spokesman for American claimed that the incident had been deliberately staged by the Federation to provoke confrontation. This is not the truth. After he was arrested, Gary contacted the National Office of the Federation. In her capacity as an attorney Peggy Pinder asked to speak with the American Airlines official who had apparently caused the arrest and with whom Gary was dealing. The official refused to speak with Peggy. After returning home Gary sent a memorandum detailing the circumstances of his arrest:

TO: Peggy Pinder

FROM: Gary Mackenstadt

DATE: September 3, 1985

SUBJECT: Narrative Statement Regarding Emergency Exit Row Incident on American Airlines Flight 391 from Chicago to Seattle on September 1, 1985

The purpose of this memorandum is to describe the incident which took place as a result of my seat assignment in the emergency exit row on American Airlines flight 391 from Chicago to Seattle on Sunday, September 1, 1985.

My wife, Denise, and I had been attending meetings of the National Federation of the Blind in Baltimore, Maryland, between August 29 and September 1, 1985. On Sunday, September 1, we departed Baltimore for Seattle with a transfer of planes in Chicago. Our flight from Baltimore to Chicago was uneventful.

In Chicago we transferred to American



Airlines flight 391, which was a direct flight from Chicago to Seattle. The scheduled departure was 3:00 p.m. Our seat assignments for flight 391 were 18-A and 18-B, which we had obtained over the telephone with American Airlines the previous week. When our row was called for boarding, we boarded the plane, only to discover that we had been assigned to the emergency exit row. I sat in 18-A, while Denise sat in 18-B. We boarded the plane at 2:45 p.m.

At approximately 2:45 p.m. a flight attendant approached me to request that I move out of the emergency exit row. She stated that FAA regulations prohibited handicapped persons from sitting in emergency exit rows. I responded that there was no such FAA regulation and that I had no intention of moving from the emergency exit row. She stated that she had a blind boyfriend and that she thought that blind persons should be allowed to sit in the emergency exit row. She then went away.

A few minutes later the same flight attendant returned, stating that it was company policy which prohibited blind persons from sitting in the emergency exit row. She said that I had been correct with respect to no FAA regulation existing prohibiting blind persons from sitting in the emergency exit row. I told her that the company policy was discriminatory on the basis of blindness and that I would not move from the seat which American Airlines had assigned to me. The flight attendant was extremely apologetic. I explained to the flight attendant that the company policy violated my civil rights. I drew an analogy between the American Airlines policy restricting the seating of blind persons and the practice in the South

thirty years ago requiring blacks to sit in the back of the bus. I explained to her that my sitting in the emergency exit row was not jeopardizing the safety of the other passengers.

The flight attendant once again left, only to return shortly with an American Airlines ground supervisor. The supervisor stated that she would not release the plane for takeoff until I had moved. I told her that I had no intention of moving. I restated my position to her. I told her that I would not move to another seat, nor would I leave the plane. She stated that she would have to contact the Chicago police. I told her that I guessed that she would have to do that.

Denise informed me that the flight attendant once again apologized for what was happening. Both the flight attendant and the ground supervisor left.

Shortly afterwards, Denise informed me that five Chicago policemen were coming. Three police officers remained on the jetway while two others came aboard to arrest me. Officer Klebba of the Chicago police department arrested me at approximately 3:25 p.m. The charge was disorderly conduct. I never raised my voice to any employee of American Airlines. I spoke in a conversational tone to the police and the employees of American Airlines without exception. The other passengers on the plane appeared to be indifferent. No comments were made. I walked off the plane with one police officer ahead of me and one behind me. The other three police officers were waiting at the top of the jetway. No one touched me. I was not harassed.

Denise followed me off the plane. When I was off the plane, I spoke with

Bruce Wingran, Manager of Passenger Affairs for American Airlines, to ask for a copy of the company policy which precludes blind persons from sitting in the emergency exit row. He refused to give me a copy of the policy, stating that it was an internal document.

Shortly thereafter, I was taken in a patrol car to the police station located in the Continental cargo building, which is near the airport. Denise accompanied me.

I was detained at the police station for a couple of hours. I never signed anything. I was not fingerprinted. The police were courteous at all times. As a matter of fact, they appeared to be supportive of my position. Bruce Wingran and another American Airlines official accompanied us to the police station, although they rode in a separate vehicle. They appeared to be extremely uptight.

I believe that the captain of flight 391 signed the complaint. However, American Airlines evidently never had any intention of pressing charges. Their primary interest was in getting me off the plane. I do not know what transpired between American Airlines and the police. I did overhear Mr. Wingran

complaining about his having rights, too.

After a while (I do not know what time it was) I was informed by the police that American Airlines was not going to press charges. We left the police station at approximately 6:00 p.m. The police took us to the airport.

While at the police station, I did have limited conversation with Mr. Wingran. He indicated that we would have to fly standby back to Seattle. During one of my telephone conversations with you, you asked to speak with Mr. Wingran. He refused to do so.

I was unable to secure a copy of the complaint which American Airlines filed against me. The police indicated that I would have to request a copy of the complaint in writing. I was given the address where I could write to request a copy of the complaint.

Upon returning to the airport, an American Airlines official contacted Denise and me to inform us that we had been booked on United Airlines back to Seattle. According to this American Airlines official, Denise and I would not be allowed to fly American back to Seattle.

## BLIND TAKE ON AIRLINES

### SEATING POLICY SPARKS A FUROR

The following article appeared October 1, 1985, in the Seattle Post Intelligencer. It was written by Post Intelligencer Reporter Alice Noble. We

reprint the article to show what the press is saying and also to show how the airlines are trying to justify their conduct to the public. If Mr. Stroop of



American Airlines is correctly quoted, Federationists know that he has uttered unequivocal falsehoods. The question then arises as to why Mr. Stroop would do this. Are airline officials perhaps afraid to face the real issues in the controversy? Here is the Post Intelligencer article:

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Gary and Denise Mackenstadt boarded their American Airlines flight in Chicago along with the other passengers, found their assigned seats and settled in for the flight home to Seattle.

But the seats were in the emergency exit row—forbidden territory for blind people such as Gary Mackenstadt. The flight crew asked the Mackenstadts to move.

The Bothell couple sat firm, forcing a standoff that ended when several Chicago police officers escorted the 37-year-old blind man off the plane.

"The feeling of the airlines is blind people are like children," said an angry Denise Mackenstadt.

### **Matter of Safety**

"We view these policies as discriminatory—on the same level as having blacks sit in the back of the bus."

But American Airlines, like many other major carriers, argues the policies are a matter of safety, even though they have triggered similar confrontations with blind people across the nation.

"The safety of the entire cabin full of people is at stake," said American Airlines spokesman Joe Stroop in Fort Worth, Texas. "We're not picking on blind people."

He said the airline policy also prevents such passengers as pregnant women and the obese from sitting near the exit doors.

### **"Less Than Agile"**

With the controversy in full bloom this year, some participants at a recent Federal Aviation Administration conference in Seattle have suggested that it may be a matter for the FAA to settle.

Ellen Hill, of the Joint Council of Flight Attendant Unions, presented a recommendation that "less than agile" people be prohibited from sitting in exit rows.

"It's politically a real hot potato," she said.

"What we're trying to do is in everybody's best interest. If they got up slowly, they're going to be trampled. They will be pushed and shoved. We're busy doing other things; we can't really assist them at that point."

Wayne Williams of the National Transportation Safety Association agreed, saying, "You've got to have able-bodied people at those exits."

"In a real accident, about half of the flight attendants are incapacitated or killed. In many cases, there's been survival because a passenger opened the exit door."

But the Mackenstadt's and Kenneth Jernigan, President of the National Federation of the Blind, believe safety is not the issue.

"It is my belief that if you take the average run of blind person and the average run of sighted person, their chances are equal for getting out of the airplane without blocking the exit rows," Jernigan said.

Jernigan described a number of confrontations between blind passengers and airlines, some of which have resulted in lawsuits that as yet are unresolved.

Among the most widely publicized was the case involving Judy Sanders, who refused to vacate an exit row on a People Express flight in Boston. She was arrested but her case was ultimately dismissed. She is suing the airline and police department for false arrest.

Jernigan also recalled the case of Sue Ammeter of Seattle, who objected when she found a blanket on her seat on an Alaskan Airlines flight. The flight attendant said it was to throw Ammeter out the exit in an emergency.

Ammeter brought action before the Washington State Human Rights Commission and won \$1,000 from the airline, plus an apology.

Reece Gilstrap, assistant vice president for customer services at Alaskan Airlines, said the incident never should have occurred. He said airline policy suggested blankets for disabled or non-ambulatory passengers—not the blind.

Stroop suggested that many of the confrontations have been planned in advance by the National Federation of the Blind, which he said has become very militant over the issue.

But Jernigan said some confrontations have arisen even though blind passengers specifically asked not to get exit row seats.

Stroop said his airline has done everything it can to let the blind organizations prove they can safely

operate the exit doors.

He said members of a Texas blind organization and the National Federation of the Blind were once invited to participate in a demonstration of emergency evacuation procedures in American Airlines flight simulators.

"Our safety people were not satisfied with the results," Stroop said. "To open the door, they must release the latch, remove the emergency door and literally throw it out of the way."

"The blind folks were unable to do that."

Until now, the FAA has remained silent on the issue, requiring only that airlines establish their own policies regarding handicapped passengers or "those who need assistance of another."

The Mackenstadts and Jernigan argue that the airline policies are inconsistent because they allow people to drink—and perhaps become inebriated—while sitting in the exit rows.

As a result of the Seattle conference, the FAA has begun forming working groups to study some of the major safety concerns.

Stroop said the conflict with the blind is only a minor part of a much larger problem. He said government officials are beginning to realize they must address the entire issue of safely evacuating airplanes.

As part of that, he said, it is likely the government may insist on design changes for emergency exit doors to provide easier, safer, and faster exits from the aircraft.

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## KICKBACKS IN THE VENDING PROGRAM

by Marc Maurer

Myrtie Elizabeth (Betty) Tetzlaff is a blind vendor operating a vending facility at the United States Post Office in Evansville, Indiana. When she took over the operation of the vending facility in May, 1982, officials of the Indiana Rehabilitation Services Division of Services for the Blind told Mrs. Tetzlaff that she must pay a percentage of her gross receipts to the Postal Employees Recreation Fund. The state agency for the blind had completed an agreement with the Evansville Postmaster which stated that up to twenty percent of the revenue derived from the vending facility would be paid to the Postal Employees Recreation Fund. This Postal Employees Recreation Fund is not a part of the post office. It is a private association of people, who work at the Evansville Post Office. With the money they get, the Postal Employees Recreation Fund purchases items such as bowling shirts, and provides certain activities, such as picnics or Christmas parties.

Of course, these payments were illegal. However, Mrs. Tetzlaff did not know this. She continued to make these payments through August of 1983.

At that time the Evansville Post Office asked the Indiana Rehabilitation Service to remove Mrs. Tetzlaff from her vending facility. The Indiana Rehabilitation Service agreed to do so. At this point, Mrs. Tetzlaff asked the National Federation of the Blind for assistance

in protecting her rights. She learned that the payments she was making were a violation of federal law, the Randolph-Sheppard Act. She also learned that the impending termination from her vending facility without a hearing violated federal law, federal regulations, and the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.

In order to protect Mrs. Tetzlaff a legal action was brought in the United States Federal District Court for the Southern District of Indiana. Mrs. Tetzlaff requested a temporary restraining order directing the Indiana Rehabilitation Service not to remove her from her vending facility. The Randolph-Sheppard Act provides for a full evidentiary hearing and federal arbitration. Mrs. Tetzlaff demanded that she be granted a hearing. The federal judge agreed, and the temporary restraining order was issued.

In the full evidentiary hearing Mrs. Tetzlaff asked for three things: that she not be removed from the vending facility, that the illegal contract requiring her to make payments to the Postal Employees Recreation Fund be declared null and void, and that the money illegally taken from her be repaid. Inasmuch as the Indiana Rehabilitation Service did not have any right to spend Mrs. Tetzlaff's money, Mrs. Tetzlaff and the Federation contended that the Indiana Rehabilitation

Service should repay the money.

The hearing officer found that the agreement between the state agency and the post office requiring Mrs. Tetzlaff to pay part of her income to the Postal Employees Recreation Fund was void. However, he also found that this agreement was an inseparable part of the permit to establish the vending facility. In other words, Mrs. Tetzlaff was no longer required to pay any money to the Postal Employees Recreation Fund, but the permit creating the vending facility was also gone.

The order of this hearing officer meant that Mrs. Tetzlaff would not be terminated from the vending facility, but the vending facility would be terminated. The order also recommended that she ask the Postal Employees Recreation Fund (which was not a party and did not appear at the hearing) to pay the money back. If the Postal Employees Recreation Fund felt moved to pay the money back, all would be well and good. If not, Mrs. Tetzlaff would simply have lost her money. It will not come as a surprise that the Postal Employees Recreation Fund did not volunteer to repay the money.

Again (with the help of the National Federation of the Blind) Mrs. Tetzlaff filed an appeal. She requested that a federal arbitration panel be convened to hear her case. She asked that her vending facility not be terminated and that the Indiana Rehabilitation Service be required to reimburse her for the money which it had taken for the Postal Employees Recreation Fund. The arbitration panel was convened, and Ralph Sanders served as one of its members. The panel's decision was issued in June of 1985. That decision required the

Indiana Rehabilitation Service to reimburse Mrs. Tetzlaff for the money it has forced her to send to the Postal Employees Recreation Fund. It also reversed the hearing officer on his ruling to terminate the vending facility.

One would think that with this decision in hand, victory would have been achieved. The state agency for the blind in Indiana violates the law; its actions are uncovered; and it is ordered to make amends. However, rather than face up to its mistakes and try to do better, the agency for the blind in Indiana appealed the decision of the panel to the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago. In making its appeal, the Indiana Rehabilitation Services did an astonishing thing. It completely left out Mrs. Tetzlaff—possibly indicating its attitude toward the blind in general and its clients in particular. Although Mrs. Tetzlaff brought the case in the beginning, although she has been the complaining party throughout, and although her rights are inextricably involved in the decision, she is not named in the lawsuit. Nothing daunted, Mrs. Tetzlaff filed a motion to intervene. She also requested that the case be dismissed because it was filed in the wrong court.

At this writing, the Court has granted the motion to intervene and directed all other parties to respond to the request for dismissal. The state agency for the blind in Indiana responded to the Court order by agreeing that it will dismiss the case.

This saga of illegality and bureaucratic incompetence has one bright note. For many years the director of the agency for the blind in Indiana has been Frederick Silver. On August 15, 1985,



Mr. Silver was relieved of his responsibilities as director of the Indiana Rehabilitation Services Division of Services for the Blind. Governor Orr has promised a thorough revamping of the Indiana Rehabilitation Services. The new director of that agency says: "There are worried people over there (at the Division of Services for the Blind), and they should be worried."

Meanwhile, Mrs. Tetzlaff continues to wait to be reimbursed for the money which was illegally taken from her. Her story was reported in the press. On August 18, 1985, the Indianapolis Star carried the following article:

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**Despite Ruling,  
State Won't Pay Blind Vendor**

by Joseph Gelarden  
Star Staff Writer

State officials say they won't pay \$6,400 to a blind woman despite a recent award from a federal arbitration panel.

They insist the money should be paid by a postal workers recreation fund that collected a share of her earnings.

"We don't owe her the money, so we appealed the award to the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals," Mark A. Willoughby, the staff lawyer for the state Department of Rehabilitation Services, said Friday.

Myrtie Tetzlaff, a 44-year-old blind woman who operates 15 vending machines at the Evansville Post Office, won the award after she and her lawyer balked at an arrangement that forced her to "kickback" as much as 20 percent of her income, half of that to a postal workers

recreation fund.

In 1982, Mrs. Tetzlaff agreed to operate the post office vending machines as part of a state program that finds blind workers jobs selling pop, snacks, and notions in public buildings.

However, when she got her permit from the postal authorities, Mrs. Tetzlaff discovered that it required her to give 10 percent of her net proceeds to the Post Office Employee Recreation Fund and 10 percent to the state Rehabilitation Services Department.

Willoughby said Mrs. Tetzlaff was "stretching it" by using the word "kickback." Instead, he said, the legal arrangement was a "set aside" and "limitation."

In August 1983, after Mrs. Tetzlaff objected to paying 20 percent of her net profits to others, postal officials ordered her out of the building.

Marc Maurer, a Baltimore lawyer who is also blind, filed suit, and federal Judge William E. Steckler barred postal officials from acting against her until they followed federal administrative hearing procedures.

After a hearing, a federal arbitrator ruled that the "commission agreement" violated federal law and that the postal permit was invalid.

Postal officials ordered her to vacate the building, but Mrs. Tetzlaff appealed the arbitrator's decision to an arbitration panel. The panel modified the earlier decision.

On June 19, the panel ruled that "the permit was, and still is, valid and that the commission money (\$6,447.01) paid to the Post Office Employee Recreation Fund should be repaid to the plaintiff."

The award said that under the Randolph-Sheppard Act, the woman should

recover the money from the Rehabilitation Services Department. The state agency could then recover the money from the post office, the award said.

She was earning about \$11,000 per year from the vending machine business and the 'kickbacks' cost her about \$4,000," said Maurer, a graduate of Indiana University School of Law-Indianapolis who once served as a campaign aide to former Indiana Secretary of State Larry Conrad.

Edward E. Hayes, the Evansville postmaster, said the vendor does not have to pay the postal employee recreation fund any longer. He said the fund is collected and administered by a committee of postal workers who used the money for picnics, bowling shirts and flowers.

"We have no complaints about her services," he said.

Jean Merritt, the director of the rehabilitation services agency, was not available for comment.

R. Mark Lubbers, an aide to Gov. Robert D. Orr, promised an investigation

of the situation.

"It is a complicated affair," said Willoughby.

"We are not paying the money because the state doesn't owe it. The money was paid to the Postal Employee Recreation Fund, not to the state. We think it was wrong for the arbitration panel to order the state to pay the money when we didn't get it. We felt the arbitration panel overstepped their authority."

He defended the requirement that blind vendors send 10 percent of their net profits to the state, saying it was approved by law.

The money paid by Mrs. Tetzlaff and the 34 other blind vendors in public buildings around the state is used to provide stock and equipment for other vendors. He said 80 percent of the money used to equip blind vendors is paid by the federal government.

"We would love to see her get the money back, but we want her to get it from the postal fund," he said.

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If you or a friend would like to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto National Federation of the Blind, 1800

Johnson Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21230, a District of Columbia nonprofit Corporation, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (or "\_\_\_\_\_ percent of my net estate" or "The following stocks and bonds: \_\_\_\_\_") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons."

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**A YEAR OF ACCOMPLISHMENT:  
SHARON GOLD REPORTS TO THE  
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND  
OF CALIFORNIA**

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(As Federationists know, Sharon Gold is the competent and energetic President of the National Federation of the Blind of California. At the spring, 1985, state convention, President Gold reviewed the year's activities and set the tone for the time ahead. Her report contains such an impressive list of accomplishments that it might well be viewed with pride as the record of achievement for a twelve-month period not only by other state organizations but by most national organizations as well.)

During last year's Convention of the National Federation of the Blind of California we held a discussion and adopted a resolution concerning a case filed in the Alameda County Superior Court against the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART). This case, which was filed by two individuals and the California Council of the Blind, now an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind, seeks damages for injuries allegedly sustained by the two individuals when they fell from a platform into the tracks and seeks an order to require BART to install edge protection along the platform on the unfounded premise that edge protection will prevent blind people from "falling onto the tracks."

When Dr. tenBroek conceived of the White Cane Law and we, the blind, sponsored legislation to bring into effect

the White Cane Law, we wished for equal access, not special access, to all places of public accommodation. We wanted to remove the barriers arbitrarily imposed by well-intentioned and well-meaning persons who would prevent us from going where they deemed it unsafe for the blind to go. That was in 1968. Now in the 1980's blind persons who belong to and follow the philosophy of the American Council of the Blind are attempting to destroy our White Cane Law by seeking money damages for injuries sustained when they apparently improperly used their white canes. Further, these blind persons are seeking the court to order BART to provide special, rather than equal, access by ordering the installation of protective strips on the platform edge to protect the blind.

The judge issued a preliminary injunction ordering BART to field test materials for a protective edge detection system. We filed a motion to intervene in the case to attempt to preserve the White Cane Law. Following our intervention, we moved to have the injunction vacated. Among other things, we asserted that a blind person does not need edge protection to travel BART as safely as a sighted person. Further, we asserted that an edge detection system on BART would accord the blind uncommon treatment, without sound actuarial basis, and thus discriminate against the blind. We were unable to convince the

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judge of the inequity of the preliminary injunction. We have, therefore, now appealed to the California Court of Appeals to have this preliminary injunction set aside.

BART has now put some edge protection material on three of its station platforms. Just as we suspected would happen, there have been a number of people who have tripped and fallen as a result of the edge protection installed to protect the blind. These accidents are unfortunately drawing unnecessary, negative attention to the blind because the accidents are caused by needless modifications being made allegedly to protect the blind. This kind of public education is counterproductive to the goals and objectives of the National Federation of the Blind, goals which you and I work hard every day to develop, goals of public acceptance of the blind and a partnership with sighted persons based upon equality.

When considering this case, it is important to note that the case has invited the court to set safety standards for the blind which are premised on the age-old stereotype of the incapacity and incompetency of the blind. To put it bluntly, I submit to you that to invite the court to interpret safety standards for the blind is not only a beginning of what may become the end of our freedom of equal access, freedom to go where we want to go and do what we want to do. In other words the court may willingly govern our lives and change the meaning of the White Cane Law if the court is given the opportunity to do so.

Further, the plaintiffs are asking for two million dollars in personal injuries and ten million dollars in punitive

damages for the intentional infliction of emotional distress on the blind. There is a real danger in speaking of personal injuries and safety standards and the right of equal access all in the same breath. How many of us have had to dispel the notion of prospective employers that the employer's insurance premiums would rise if the blind or disabled are hired? Today, we can make the argument to employers that their insurance premiums will not go up because of hiring us. This is probably one of the most persuasive arguments we have for breaking the job market.

But what if a court has ruled that blind persons have received money damages for personal injuries under Section 54 of the California Civil Code, the very code section which gives us the right of equal access. If the blind use Section 54 of the Civil Code to sue for personal injuries based on the incapacity of the blind to take public places as they find them, we are likely to build a substantial record for insurance companies which could lead us to the exclusion of the blind from everywhere, including streets, sidewalks, public buildings, common carriers, housing, employment, and even a visit to the home of a friend or relative.

Art Linkletter of radio and television fame made a veritable fortune with the expression that "people are funny about money." If an individual's insurance premiums will increase or there is a likelihood of a successful lawsuit arising from the presence of the blind on the individual's property, we will cease to be accepted and welcome. I submit to you that if this happens to the blind, the precedent will be set, and it will affect the rest of the disabled commun-

ity as well. The National Federation of the Blind of California is committed to do what we can to prevent this abuse of the blind and of our White Cane Law.

Federationists will remember that in 1980 Michael Hingson was ejected from a Pacific Southwest Airlines plane when he refused to sit with his dog guide in a bulkhead seat. Michael sued PSA for damages resulting from the injuries and humiliation he sustained at the hands of the PSA airline officials. In 1983 Michael's case came to trial and resulted in an unfavorable decision. The judge showed partiality to PSA by excluding evidence and testimony of importance to Michael's position. We appealed the decision and the Ninth District Federal Court ordered the lower court to hold a new trial and the judge to hear the evidence and testimony which he caused to be excluded. There will be a hearing in April to set the trial for Michael's case.

Last year we found Bob Acosta in so many violations of the January 31, 1983, court order that we were again forced to request Judge Crickard of the Los Angeles County Superior Court to issue an order to show cause why Bob Acosta should not be held in contempt of court. We went to trial on this issue on August 29, and the judge found Mr. Acosta and the California Council of the Blind in contempt of court for having telephone listings in the name "National Federation of the Blind of California." For this violation of the January 31, 1983, court order Judge Crickard fined both Bob Acosta and the California Council of the Blind. Disliking Judge Crickard's decision, Bob Acosta turned to the California Court of Appeals, but the court denied his plea for help. Mr. Acosta

then sought help from the California Supreme Court, which also refused to consider his appeal thus confirming Judge Crickard's Order of Contempt of Court against Bob Acosta and the California Council of the Blind.

Over the past several years I have reported to you concerning problems faced by blind parents in the raising of their children. This year the NFB of California again took part in the protection of the right of blind parents to raise their children without interference.

Jim Tucker is a blind father who resides in Washington state, but who used to live in San Diego, California. Last September Jim Gashel of our National Office advised me of a telephone call that he received from Jim Tucker. Mr. Tucker reported to Mr. Gashel that he was a blind father seeking custody of his children through the courts in San Diego and that the issue of blindness was preventing the court from awarding the custody of the children.

Upon investigation, I learned that in 1978, following a divorce from his wife, Mr. Tucker sought custody of his children when his wife became unable to care for them. A San Diego judge refused to award Mr. Tucker custody of his children because he was blind and the judge apparently considered a blind person unable to raise children. Mr. Tucker did not know about the National Federation of the Blind and did not know of his rights. Thus, the children were awarded to the maternal grandmother.

Recently the custody of Mr. Tucker's children again became an issue before the San Diego court and again the issue of Mr. Tucker's blindness surfaced. I

am advised that a social worker involved in the case reported to the court in reference to Mr. Tucker's daughter that were it not that Mr. Tucker is blind, she would recommend immediate placement of the child with her father, Jim Tucker.

At the request of Jim Tucker and his lawyer, the National Federation of the Blind of California filed declarations with the court in an effort to dispose of the concern over blindness prevailing in the court record. Always in the past when we have filed such papers, we have had blind parents file supporting documents as to the raising of their children. This time it seemed appropriate to take a different tack. Thus, we sought sighted children of blind parents for assistance. The NFB of California contacted Nick tenBroek, son of Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, a blind father; and Kevin Smalley, son of Nancy Smalley, a blind mother who is also a single parent. In the declarations filed on behalf of Mr. Tucker these children attested to their upbringing by blind parents. In addition to this, Andrew Meisel, attorney for the National Federation of the Blind of California, who has now been involved on behalf of the NFB of California in many child custody cases involving blind parents, filed a declaration of his knowledge of blind parents and their successes in raising their children.

Mr. Tucker has advised me that upon the filing of the declarations, the court dispensed with any further reference as to his blindness, and on November 30 he was awarded custody of his daughter. It is expected that he will soon be awarded custody of his son.

Last fall I received a telephone call

from Patty Cutler, the Vice President of our Hemet Valley Chapter. Patty reported to me that she had been contacted by a blind parent from the San Bernardino Area who had her two children taken from her under very unusual circumstances and who was to go to court the next day concerning the return of her children. On the evening the children were taken from her home, the mother had telephoned the police department for assistance, as would any other citizen, following the vandalism of her home by some older neighborhood children who broke out the windows and turned hoses into her house, filling it with water.

When the police arrived at the woman's home and found her, a blind mother with two small children, they ceased to be concerned with the vandals and the vandalism (the reason the police were summoned) and centralized their concern on whether the blind mother was fit to care for her small children. The police decided that the flooded house was unsafe for the children. It is customary in such conditions and circumstances for the police to inquire if the family can stay with neighbors or friends or to assist the family in finding other shelter. The importance of keeping the family together is to be considered the highest priority. Instead of protecting the family unit from separation, the police took the children from the blind mother and placed them in the county shelter. The mother was left in the unsafe house with broken windows and two inches of water to worry about the welfare of her children who had been carried away by the police.

Although the blind mother sought help from the Bob Acosta-led California



Council of the Blind, now an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind, she was refused assistance. On the day before she was to go to court, the mother learned of the National Federation of the Blind of California and contacted Patty Cutler. Following my telephone conversation with Patty, I spoke with the blind mother who requested that I speak with her attorney. The next morning, the day of the court appearance, I spoke extensively with the blind mother's attorney concerning the right of blind parents to raise their children. Although Patty Cutler was due momentarily to deliver her fifth child she, together with other members of the Hemet Valley Chapter, accompanied the mother to court and stood by her side as the blind mother faced the judge who would decide the destiny of her life with her children. I am happy to tell you that the children were returned to the blind mother and that they are once again living together as a family unit.

In addition to these two court cases, we have had other reports of interference with the rights of blind parents. For example, one parent reported that following a parent/teacher conference, at which time the teacher learned that the child had a blind mother, a school nurse arrived at the parent's door to check out the home. After visiting with the mother for awhile, the nurse admitted to the mother that the school was concerned to see that all was well because there was a blind parent in the home. Sighted parents do not have their homes inspected by the school nurse without provocation as did this blind parent.

As another example a blind mother reported that her child was a few

minutes late coming home from school so the mother telephoned the school to be sure that the child had left the school at the usual time. When the school official returned the mother's call after talking with the child's teacher, blindness became the issue—that is, whether the blind mother could adequately supervise her child. When a sighted parent calls the school to check on the lateness of a child's arrival at home from school, the parent is certainly not subjected to such questioning.

It is obvious in both of these situations that the school was questioning whether the blind parent was exercising proper care and control of the child—a question which would never have arisen had the parent been sighted.

In 1978 Section 300(a) of the Welfare and Institutions code was amended to include language to prevent discrimination against the blind, the deaf, and the physically disabled. With the amendment the law currently reads, "No parent shall be found to be incapable of exercising proper and effective parental care or control solely because of a physical disability including, but not limited to, a defect in the visual or auditory functions of his or her body, unless (it says 'unless') the court finds that the disability prevents the parent from exercising such care and control."

Since this language has been added to the code, blind parents have experienced an even greater discrimination than prior to this time. For example, the language "unless the court finds that the disability prevents the parent from exercising such care and control" was used by the judge in the Shirley Wicken-



berg case of a couple of years ago to raise the question as to the safety of her home. The judge made such statements as "we have to be sure there aren't razor blades in the home to cut the children."

In the Patty Bardon case which we handled last year in the Orange County Court, the language of Section 300(a) was attempted to be used to allow the court to evaluate Ms. Bardon's adjustment to blindness which was an issue totally unrelated to the family situation which originally brought Ms. Bardon and her child into the court.

In every case we have handled regarding a blind parent (whether it has involved the courts, the district attorney, a social worker, or the schools) the language of Section 300(a) has been pointed to as something giving the authorities a license to shift the burden to the blind parents to prove that blindness does not prevent these parents from exercising proper care and control of their children. Thus, we see language which was put into the law to protect us, operating in reverse and flying as a red flag over the code section to call in "big brother" to check us out as parents who happen to be blind.

At the request of the National Federation of the Blind of California on March 5 Assemblyman Lloyd Connelly of Sacramento introduced AB-1360. This bill will, upon passage by the California legislature, amend Section 300 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code by deleting all references to the blind, the deaf, and the disabled. This amendment will force the courts, district attorneys, social workers, and the schools to evaluate our parenting quali-

ties rather than our physical characteristics and will allow us to assert our right to raise our children as guaranteed to all citizens by the United States Constitution.

Speaking of legislation, we have sponsored, together with the Association of California Life Insurance Companies, Assembly Bill 1853. Passage of this legislation will amend Section 10144 of the Insurance Code, add Section 10145 to the Code, and will prevent insurance companies from refusing to insure or limiting the amount, extent, or kind of coverage available to an individual, or from charging a different rate for the same coverage solely because of blindness or partial blindness. This legislation is authored by Assemblyman David Elder of Long Beach. Senator Alan Robbins of the San Fernando Valley is the principal coauthor. AB-1853 came as a result of a resolution adopted on December 14, 1984, by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners which amended the Model Regulation on Unfair Discrimination on the Basis of Blindness or Partial Blindness. Following passage of the resolution which was drawn up in consultation with James Gashel, Director of Governmental Affairs for the National Federation of the Blind, the amendment was sent to Insurance Commissioners across the country for review and adoption.

Job Opportunities for the Blind (JOB) continues to be a most worthy and successful project of the National Federation of the Blind. JOB has now helped in the placement of more than 500 blind persons in competitive employment since the inception of the project four years ago. Through our efforts more than twenty-four blind Californians have ob-

tained competitive employment during the last two years. This means that we are currently assisting one blind person per month in finding employment in California. Just last weekend our office received another call from a newly employed blind Californian.

During the past year we have worked very closely with the California State Personnel Board to publicize testings for state positions. As a part of our effort, we worked in cooperation with the State Personnel Board to publicize the Staff Services Analyst examination which was opened up by the Board to Hispanics and the disabled. A letter was distributed to our entire mailing list announcing the examination. Through our office, all of the examination materials were recorded on cassette and distributed on request to blind persons. We distributed approximately 250 packets of materials on the Staff Services Analyst examination. As a result, 29.9% of all persons taking the examination were blind.

Nancy Smalley is employed by the Los Angeles Office of the Department of Motor Vehicles as a Program Technician. Recently Nancy made application for an examination for advancement to the position of Driver Improvement Analyst. Nancy possessed more than the minimum requirement of education, knowledge, and departmental experience required to enter the examination. The testing had two requirements that Nancy failed to meet—that of a valid California driver's license and a good driving record. Since the job entails being a hearing officer for California Driver's Licenses, where special circumstances exist, it is unreasonable for the Department of Motor Vehicles to prevent

Nancy from taking the examination or getting a job solely because she does not drive a car.

On March 7th we filed an appeal with the California State Personnel Board asserting that Nancy should be allowed to take the examination for the Driver Improvement Analyst position and further asserting that to prevent her from taking the examination was unreasonable and in violation of the law. Within the week the Department of Motor Vehicles issued a notice to Nancy of a policy change dropping the requirement of a driver's license to take the examination. Nancy may now take the examination for the Driver Improvement Analyst, but all is not over yet. For although Nancy may take the exam for the job, she has also been notified that she will be required to obtain a valid California driver's license before she can be advanced to the new position. Next week we are going to appeal this requirement, too. We are the National Federation of the Blind, and we will take our wins in small bites or in big meals, however they may come.

Carmella Contasani of Monterey is a teacher of foreign languages who happens to be blind. She is also a member of the NFB. During the past year Carmella faced two instances of real discrimination against her because of her blindness. In the first instance, the community was holding a play in which there was a blind character. Carmella wished to try out for the part, but when she went to the audition she was prevented from auditioning and the part was given to someone else—a sighted person who knew nothing about blindness. Our Monterey Chapter (Betty Hendricks, President) engaged in several discus-

sions with the theater group, and we now have been given assurance that any blind person wishing to audition for community plays in Monterey will be given the opportunity to do so in the future. Further, we have been promised advance notice of impending plays for which auditions will be held so as to give blind persons enough lead time to have scripts put into Braille.

In the second instance of discrimination, Carmella wished to participate in a square dance group. The caller of the group told Carmella she could not join and square dance with sighted people where she was the only blind person. There is a blind square dance group in Monterey, and Carmella was told that she should join that group if she wanted to square dance. But the square dance group for the blind is a beginners group, and the group in which Carmella wished to participate was an advanced group and Carmella is an experienced square dancer. Carmella thought she had a right to square dance along with her sighted community members in a group of nonbeginners, and we agreed with her. Negotiations were held with the square dance group leaders during which time it was brought to their attention that such exclusion of a blind person from a community square dance group because she was blind was in violation of Carmella's rights under the White Cane Law. As a result, Carmella was admitted to the square dance group.

Dennis Cain is a member of our Orange

County Chapter and a student at the California State University at Fullerton. Wishing to be a Marriage and Family Counselor, Dennis sought and achieved a bachelor of science degree with a major in Psychology. Graduation was only a step toward Dennis's goal, because becoming a licensed family counselor requires a master's degree. Thus, Dennis applied for admission to and was accepted and enrolled in the master's program at CSUF. The Department of Rehabilitation has refused to provide Dennis with financial assistance beyond a bachelor's degree, claiming that a bachelor's degree in psychology is sufficient for entry level employment regardless of whether it is in his field. Dennis disagreed with this decision and took his case to the California Rehabilitation Appeals Board, which ruled in favor of the Department. Last Monday, March 25, we filed a writ in the San Francisco County Superior Court seeking a court ordered rehearing of the Dennis Cain case in order that Dennis may present new evidence to the Rehabilitation Appeals Board. We have received a hearing date for that writ, which is May 17.

My fellow Federationists, the health of the National Federation of the Blind of California has never been better. We stand at the threshold of a new day for the blind of this state and nation. We are the National Federation of the Blind, and we are actively changing what it means to be blind.

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**SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO TURN THE BURGERS**

A Review of  
If Blindness Strikes: Don't Strike Out  
by Margaret M. Smith

Reviewed by Anthony Cobb

(Mr. Cobb is the Assistant Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind.)

Margaret Smith is no doubt a perfectly charming individual, if we are to judge by the winning personality which emerges from her prose. One would probably find her witty, personable, and bright. Those characteristics notwithstanding, the image of blindness she conveys in If Blindness Strikes: Don't Strike Out (Charles Thomas, 1984) suggests the old story of good intentions defeated by reversion to harmful stereotypes, so that the potential heralded by the author's clear rejection of such obvious fallacies as the "blind personality" and "sixth sense" in her early chapters is never realized in later pages. At least three recurrent patterns emerge from this book to frustrate the reader who holds the National Federation of the Blind's view about blindness.

First, Smith never really gets beyond the idea that blindness is something with which one must simply cope in a physical and emotional sense along with the implicit assumption that a blind person really cannot expect to compete as an equal in this society. In fact, she admonishes, "Nothing will turn off other people quicker [sic] than the attitude of total independence, of being

always able to do it yourself." Since Smith sees blindness as "a serious, sometimes grave, disability that is surmountable most of the time," (emphasis mine) it is perfectly all right, for example, to ask your grocery store's manager to assign store clerks to you as a blind shopper since everybody knows the clerks are happier helping blind people than doing their pricing and stocking anyway. Never mind that this may reinforce people's belief that the blind need so many special concessions that they really can't be expected to compete on the basis of equality.

For similar reasons, one assumes, Smith sees nothing wrong with free fishing licenses for the blind, with two-for-one bus fares, or reduced Amtrak fares for the blind. She finds no fault with the airlines' contention that the blind cannot be allowed to sit by emergency exits "since it's unlikely that a blind passenger would lead the way out in an emergency landing." She takes for granted surrender of canes on airplanes because turbulent weather might turn them into projectiles (presumably along with serving trays, briefcases, eyeglasses, books, or anything else which may be present when the plane hits turbulence). We can even abandon any

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expectation that blind persons master the inordinately difficult task of cutting meat in restaurants since it is always possible to say to the waitress, "I'm blind, would you please have my meat cut in the kitchen?" As for cafeterias—well, unless you can see, you are better off in Smith's view to let someone else go through the line for you. What a picture of blindness emerges from these negative assumptions! One wonders what to Smith actually constitutes "striking out" in the adjustment to blindness.

To reiterate, Margaret Smith does not seem to be a mean person and clearly is not ignorant—judging from some of her random observations—of the potential for the blind to achieve a measure of success, though it appears she envisions only limited success and certainly not much real equality. Old notions and inhibitions simply won't disappear for her. For example, she avers that "Jostling throngs are no place for a blind person"; therefore, the blind are encouraged to do their Christmas shopping early. Smith seems to assume that the blind will find great difficulty with even the simplest tasks, for example pulling out the refrigerator and oven shelves and putting them back. A blind person simply cannot be expected to read through all of her (she is blind) personal papers thoroughly and, perhaps, not at all. It is "hard to plan and execute a system for sorting and reading mail, filing personal records, and maintaining phone numbers and addresses." Safe travel for the blind is so complex that it required the development of "the art and science of orientation and mobility." (Smith offers no explanation for how thousands

of blind persons have bypassed the complexity and simply learned to go where they wish.) In summary, Smith's commentary says clearly that the only salvation lies in admitting how seriously impaired one really is as a blind person and making concessions to that impairment in order to be well-adjusted and reasonably happy—or, at least, cheerfully resigned to one's permanent ineptitude.

In the process of adjusting, the author suggests it is all right to rely on others to do the really heavy stuff like earning the family living. She cites the story of Tom, for example, who took early retirement because his low vision could not meet the demands of his mechanical engineering job "without many accommodations." He and his wife chose to reverse roles because "she was anxious to resume her nursing career." Smith reports with apparent approval that many of her blind students have become the homemakers so that their spouses could enter the work force. Anyone who has worked with blind students will, of course, recognize why this sort of thing occurs and point out that it has nothing to do with the blind person's wishing to reverse roles for variety or out of consideration for a partner's career. Both the blind and sighted spouses, in fact, believe the blind person probably can't make the family's living and that the sighted one will have to do it.

There is a lot of room in Smith's notes of what it means to be blind for leaning on others to the point of dependence in dealing with emotional and actual needs as a blind person. The blind student, for example, is encouraged to depend upon the college



office for disabled students with the admonition that one really shouldn't believe he can handle school work all by himself. (That's basic school work, not the larger struggle for equal opportunity.) The author's entire tack on this aspect of blindness is the second disturbing pattern in this book, for it waxes almost condescending in places. The adult blind person needs, apparently without exception, to have explained the most rudimentary things about organizing one's personal affairs and paying bills. There is throughout the book a tone suggesting that, despite her brave protestations early in the work, Smith does not really believe the blind are competent enough to succeed in competition with the sighted, even though she is herself very likely a competent blind person.

Another dead giveaway of Smith's real attitude is the telltale distinction between the totally blind and those with partial vision. Some partially sighted can shop by themselves, for example, while presumably the totally blind cannot. Elsewhere she writes with respect to handling liquids: "Even partially sighted people suffer their share of puddles or scolds." The implication is as clear as that in her admonition about allowing for cooking disasters as a blind person: "Blindness probably isn't to blame in these instances. People with normal sight have tried and failed." The author is clearly unaware of her implicit assignment of superiority to sighted techniques on the basis of their being inherently more efficient and thus less likely to produce accidents, but it recurs and results in her expressions of willingness to consign the blind to resignation and defeat in

simple tasks for want of a little exploration and ingenuity. She tells, for example, the following story in the midst of advice on coping in the kitchen:

"A partially sighted housewife named Mary was proud she had given up frying food altogether. Broiling and baking meat, poultry, and fish all began when she lost her sight and didn't know for sure when pork chops or fish filets became brown. She even makes hamburgers for her hungry five-member family by arranging them in a shallow pan and baking them for twenty-five minutes at 325 degrees. She doesn't have to turn the burgers."

Now, if Mary and her family simply like baked burgers better than fried, this is a salutary development, but that is clearly not the thrust of the story. The point is painfully clear. They bake the burgers because she is blind, not because they like them.

That Smith's work is largely a "cook-book" of techniques is hardly surprising, given these underlying philosophical weaknesses. The real problems of blindness are, of course, not to be addressed through providing catalogs of techniques since they result from exactly the sort of misconceptions and stereotypes which permeate the author's writing. According to Smith, the blind must be satisfied with merely trying to hold their own against despair; they must feel free to take advantage of the sighted public's willingness to provide all sorts of concessions to blindness, even though the price paid for them is a perpetual image of inferiority; and, of course, there is no acknowledged role for collective action—these are the motifs which frustrate and irritate the

informed reader of this book.

The third major pattern is, in a sense, the most disappointing. Smith fails to see that the real remedy for feeling miserable about one's blindness lies in breaking out of the cycle of pity and the feelings of inferiority she seems only too willing—albeit unintentionally—to perpetuate. One must come to feel at a visceral level that it is respectable to be blind, not merely mouth the right words about blindness as a characteristic, as does this author.

This book serves to keep alive some of the worst stereotypes, misconceptions, and myths about blindness and thus reinforces, sometimes subtly and sometimes

blatantly, the notion that to be blind is to be inferior. Margaret Smith's heart may be in the right place; however, she obviously needs exposure to and belief in a truly positive and realistic approach to her subject, without which one suspects she will forever mislead her clients. To profit from learning alternative techniques of blindness, one must believe there is a reason to learn them. He must believe that he can earn a living, participate in politics, live a full social life, and otherwise achieve first-class citizenship. Margaret Smith provides nothing in this book to foster that belief.

## IDAHO COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND LOSES BATTLE

by Marc Maurer

On February 3, 1984, Ramona Walhof, the Director of the Idaho Commission for the Blind, was fired. This was the culmination of a series of illegal meetings of the two sighted board members of the Idaho Commission for the Blind. The series of astonishing events which surrounded this dismissal has been extensively reported in an article entitled "Idaho: Chaos and Political Shenanigans" in the March, 1984, Braille Monitor.

When Mrs. Walhof was fired, many of the staff members at the Commission for the Blind spoke eloquently of the excellent leadership which she had provided to the agency. Blind people from

throughout the state were outraged. Except for those who had joined in the conspiracy to violate the state Open Meeting Law (or to procure the violation of that law), there was virtual unanimity of opinion that the dismissal was a travesty. Unjust and unfair, this dismissal was a serious blow to programs for the blind in the state. Many of the staff members of the Idaho Commission for the Blind protested that it was unreasonable for them to work in an atmosphere of oppression and intimidation. If the policy of the Commission was to reward accomplishment with illegal secret meetings, intrigue, and

public humiliation; several employees felt that it would not be possible to continue working for the agency.

One person who expressed this feeling quite strongly was the Deputy Director, John Cheadle. At a public meeting of the Commission for the Blind board held February 3, 1984, Mr. Cheadle said:

"Mr. Chairman, members of the board: I came here (as most of you know) about a year ago. I came here specifically so that I could work with Mrs. Walhof and the blind of this state to develop the programs in this state that I believed had the potential (and I still believe they have the potential) to become the best programs for the blind in the nation. I have known Mrs. Walhof, and I have also worked in other agencies for the Blind....

"The promise for independence of blind people is at stake. It's at stake here, and it's at stake right now. There is no question about that in my mind....

"Mrs. Walhof has come closer to bringing the dream of blind people to fruition than anybody else in this state. I admire her ability as a Director, her ability as an administrator, and her ability to have real compassion and real love for blind people. I work hard at my job; she works harder at hers. I have come early in the morning; she's up before I am. I have seen her at work at 5:00 a.m. I've seen her work past midnight. I know that she believes in the abilities of blind people. I know that she has the capacity to help the blind of this state fulfill the dream of independence. I believe that the action of the board today will determine that future. Whether the dream is fulfilled in the near future or the distant future

is up to the board—now. I believe that a vote to dismiss Mrs. Walhof would bring this agency into utter chaos.

"...The issue here is not Mrs. Walhof. The issue is not Mrs. Walhof's leadership....

"I will not continue to work in an agency that offers no hope for blind people. If Mrs. Walhof goes, I will go...."

After the Commission for the Blind board meeting of February 3, 1984, Howard Barton, the newly installed Director of the Commission, asked Mr. Cheadle if he had resigned during the board meeting. Mr. Cheadle responded that he had not. Howard Barton then informed Mr. Cheadle that he was fired.

Mr. Cheadle applied for unemployment compensation. The Commission for the Blind opposed any award of unemployment. Officials of the agency said that Mr. Cheadle had been in a policy making position at the agency. Therefore, he should not be entitled to receive unemployment benefits under Idaho law. The case was appealed through several administrative steps to the Idaho Industrial Commission. That agency has now ruled against the Commission for the Blind and in favor of Mr. Cheadle. He will be receiving his full unemployment compensation.

The principles of those controlling the Idaho Commission for the Blind fall into a clear and ugly pattern. The blind of the state of Idaho have staunchly opposed the deliberate destruction of programs for the blind in that state. Commission officials have taken every opportunity to try to intimidate blind clients and the organized blind movement. Each effort to dominate our movement has failed. The

blind will not tolerate injustice or unfairness. Every time it is tried we will fight it. Though the struggle is long and the effort painful, we shall not permit our progress to be halted or our search for independence to be

stifled. In this case our faith has been justified by the action of the Idaho Industrial Commission. On the 9th of September, 1985, the Industrial Commission ordered that Mr. Cheadle be granted full unemployment compensation.

### THE MINNEAPOLIS SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND AND NAC SIX YEARS LATER: WHO WON THE PROXY WAR

by Joyce Scanlan

(The National Federation of the Blind has a sense of history. It takes the long view and is more concerned with final outcome than with individual battles. The following report was given at the 1985 convention of the National Federation of the Blind by Joyce Scanlan, President of the National Federation of the Blind of Minnesota and member of the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind. Federationists and non-Federationists alike shall read and ponder.)

Beside a picture of a man from the waist down, stepping off the curb into the street with a white cane extended, we read the following: "After November 14 you'll hear a lot more tapping on Hennepin Avenue. On November 14 an election will decide whether the National Federation of the Blind will take over the Minneapolis Society for the Blind.

"If they do, seventy-five to ninety

percent of the blind clients and workers will be put out on the streets, ending sixty-two years of services. You see, the National Federation would like to exclude anyone who has handicaps in addition to blindness. What's more, many blind persons will lose their jobs. Even our whole building will close—which makes these suddenly your responsibilities instead of ours. That's why we need your help. Right now. Our bylaws require that you be a member to vote. And they also require that each member pay a dollar a year in dues.

"So please return the coupon with \$1, and we'll contact you for your voting proxy. We will also give you information about the National Federation of the Blind's position and their proxy. But please hurry.

"If you don't tap your wallet for a dollar and return your membership application, hundreds of blind people will surely be tapping on Hennepin



Avenue."

This shocking advertisement appeared in the Minneapolis Star on October 23, 1979. It was the first in a series of malicious and highly sensationalized pieces of media propaganda bought and paid for by the Minneapolis Society for the Blind for the sole purpose of keeping the blind from obtaining any voice in the Society's operation as the result of the court ordered election scheduled for November 14, 1979.

The ad which has been quoted was followed by this one on October 28: The picture shows a pair of hands placing dark glasses over a person's eyes. The text reads in part: "If it's hard to face most of our blind people thrown out on the street, we can help you hide." Then, after the same attacks on the Federation and the same plea for help, the ad continues: "If you don't face up to the problem now, you'll see a lot more faces on the street."

For the period July 13, 1979 (when the Minnesota Supreme Court decreed that the Minneapolis Society for the Blind had violated state law and discriminated against blind people) until November 14, 1979, (when the court ordered election of the Society's officers and board members took place) was filled with frequent court appearances, encounters with the media over scurrilous attacks by the Society upon the National Federation of the Blind and its leaders, and vigorous and heroic efforts to gather votes to win representation on the Society's board. In the first ever proxy campaign we (the organized blind) found ourselves pitted against the entire agency establishment of the nation, with an estimated net worth of a half billion dollars and its profes-

sional staff, whose greatest fear was that it might lose its perceived control over the lives of blind people.

Foremost among the agencies was NAC (the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped) with its Executive Director, Richard Bleecker. He, together with Society Executive Director Jesse Rosten and Society President Richard Johnstone spearheaded a nationwide campaign junket to drum up support, with the Society alone spending \$150,000—at least, that's what they admitted spending. Money, time, and prestige were lavishly provided to arm-twist blind people and the sighted population into signing proxies for the Society. In terms of sheer members the Society might claim it had a margin—24,000 for the Society and 14,000 for the Federation. However, even with that, certain facts raise such questions that any higher numbers become virtually meaningless.

Prior to the election (before the court ordered the Society to hand over to us the proxies and other election materials) the Society had unilateral control over all proxies. Federation proxies had to be in ten days before the election while the Society continued to accept proxies for itself. The court ordered examination of the proxies revealed at least eighteen percent of our proxies were measured by criteria which were different from those applied to Society proxies. Many of our proxies were erroneously disqualified. We have confirmed that many Society proxies were not accompanied by the required dollar for membership dues. Also, many of the Society's numerous mailings did not include the required Federation proxy



and information sheet. Of the more than one million proxies mailed out by the Society in Minnesota alone, only 17,000 (or two percent) were returned. Outside Minnesota, the Society received 6,500 proxies to the Federation's 11,500. As for the "National Referendum," which was so loudly proclaimed during the election campaign as the touchstone which would determine who speaks for the blind, the Federation had sixty-four percent of the national vote—a veritable landslide by most election measurements.

Thus, numbers alone tell us very little about the outcome of the election. Even the numbers gained the Federation eight seats on the Society's board—eight more than we had ever before held.

At the time of the proxy campaign in 1979 (if one is to judge by their behavior at the NAC board meeting in Oklahoma City that November) Rosten, Johnstone, and Bleecker were confident that they had thoroughly defeated the Federation. As Rosten put it: "We got more votes, and I still have my job." Johnstone's bluster was surpassed only by his estrangement from the truth as he gave his version of the status of work with the blind in a speech before the NAC meeting. Their jobs and power over the field of blindness were what really mattered to NAC and the Minneapolis Society.

As far as the blind are concerned, there is much, much more to the outcome of the election and to the whole series of changes which have occurred in the six years since the proxy battle. Let's talk about jobs first since that was so important to Jesse Rosten. At the NAC meeting Rosten was bragging about still having his job. Well, he shouldn't have

done that—because in September of 1980 Rosten was parted from his employment at the Society. From the rather pleased reactions of Society staff people, it seems clear that the decision for Rosten's departure was not entirely his own.

Mel Saterbak, who replaced Rosten as Society Executive, lasted until 1983, when Jane Pazlar stepped into the position. Incidentally, September of 1980 was also when Bill Gallagher replaced Gene Apple as Director of the American Foundation for the Blind. Dick Bleecker lost his seat as head of NAC to Dennis Hartenstine in 1983. Then, Dick Johnstone was moved aside as chairman of the Society board. His successor was John Crother. So, you see, the Society's ad about "a lot more faces on the street" proved to be true—except instead of the faces of blind people, they were the faces of ousted agency executives.

During the past six years the Society has been plagued with staff turnover throughout its rehabilitation program. Even many long-term staff members at the rehabilitation center have left. The Society board has also undergone great changes in faces since 1979. Of course, our eight Federation representatives served until 1982, when they resigned amid widespread publicity concerning the Society's unwillingness to operate openly and permit the board to act in a policy setting capacity. While our people served, the board consisted of sixteen blind members out of thirty. Two officers were blind. Today, we are told by a staff person that only three or four of the voting board members are blind. We know of several blind members of the Society board who resigned in disgust when they too realized that

their presence counted for little in the way of meaningful participation.

Before the proxy fight six years ago, the Society was the only show in town as far as blindness was concerned. Almost every blind citizen of Minnesota sooner or later encountered the Society, and the metropolitan community of Minneapolis and St. Paul thought of the Society first when questions about blindness arose. Then, as a result of the publicity surrounding the proxy fight and the lawsuit which continued beyond the proxy fight, the community learned that there were two dramatically opposed philosophies of blindness and that blind people don't agree with the image of the helpless, hopeless blind portrayed by the Society.

We learned that if we were going to change public attitudes toward blindness, we had to do something about removing the Minneapolis Society for the Blind from its position of recognition as the expert in the area. The election campaign had cost us less than \$5,000, but when we were confronted with the Society's \$40,000 ads with their degrading portrayal of blind people wallowing in the gutters of the city, we began to understand that a gigantic task was out there waiting for us.

We were now ready to take this business of public education seriously. A specific brochure called, "Why Minnesota's Blind Don't Always See Eye to Eye," was prepared and widely circulated. It lined up the Society and the Federation side by side and drew graphic comparisons as to the structure, membership, philosophy, governing body, funding sources, and purpose. We also circulated a huge quantity of Federation literature, especially the "What is the

NFB" pamphlet.

Our efforts to make educational presentations and show films to community organizations and schools were increased. We offered our services to human service agencies, employers, etc. to do training seminars about blindness.

For more than three years we employed a person as Director of Educational Programs to coordinate all community relations efforts. And we began publication of The Blindside, a newsletter to provide information about blindness to the public. That newsletter has won awards in several public relations categories, and we have received recognition for our total public relations program. Articles from our newsletter have been reprinted by human service groups and by other public newspapers. Our articles have inspired editorial comment from all around the state. We have tried to promote blind people and what they are doing. Problems have been dealt with also, but our main goal was to present the Federation in a positive light and to help the public understand what really is important to blind people.

The Society had a vested interest in presenting the blind as needy and helpless. After all, if blind people don't need the Society, the Society might go out of business—and all of the professionals would lose their jobs. Our best option at the time seemed to be to work on the general public—introducing the need for blind people to share in community life, presenting the Federation as the guiding force in our lives, and showing how the Federation is in the forefront of social change with respect to blindness.

You may wonder if we have abandoned our efforts to reform the Society, this

fine NAC accredited agency. No, we haven't. We're simply attacking from a different direction. We're convinced that our educational blitz has been extremely successful, for there have been other changes which have taken place with the Society—changes which greatly affected blind people.

The Society, too, launched a public relations crusade. It put together a very slick looking and high priced packet to promote a program it called: "Partners in Freedom." A newsletter entitled: 20/20 also appeared. Always the Society's publicity stressed the importance of the agency and its funding. Conspicuously underplayed is the role of blind people. Federationists have been on the alert for reprints of articles from 20/20 or editorial comments as the results of some 20/20 article. In examining newspaper articles carefully, we have seen no public response whatsoever to Society promotional efforts. It is clear from comments by Society staff and board members (even at the time of the proxy battle) that everyone recognized the potential damage of the Society's ad campaign, not only to the image of blind people, but also to the standing of the Society in the community. The meager publicity efforts to salvage the Society's good name could not undo the damage caused by the desperate campaign tactics to "guilt" the public into signing proxies for the Society. If the Society was to survive and those professional jobs be maintained, far more stringent measures than mere publicity about this wonderful institution were required. The Society has never been effective or comfortable dealing with blindness. It has never been willing or able to respond to the

changing and rising expectations of the blind population. In all of our best efforts to describe how negative the Society's attitudes toward blindness really are, the Federation has never accomplished what the Society did on its own behalf in those ads. Although NAC and Bleecker were credited by Johnstone with providing help to the Society in fighting the Federation, NAC (in the reaccreditation report for the Society in 1980) termed the ads unfortunate for the Society.

In one of the ads the Society offered to help the public "hide" from its responsibility of taking care of blind people. As circumstances have developed, it is the Society which is searching for a way to "hide"—to hide from embarrassment, to hide from its past, to hide from blind people. How could this charitable agency escape from the situation it had created for itself?

Richard Johnstone's statement in 1979 before the NAC meeting that agencies must be "business oriented" has been implemented at the Society. Jane Pazlar, the current chief executive officer, has no background in rehabilitation. Her experience with blindness has been as a Society board member only. When Tom Hansen left as head of the rehabilitation center in early 1984, the position was not filled until very recently. More and more blind Minnesotans are obtaining adjustment to blindness training from programs in other states. Services for the Blind, the state agency which has traditionally purchased adjustment training services from the Society, was not pleased with the shift away from a rehabilitation perspective. Before 1979 blind residents of Minnesota had little hope of

receiving training anywhere but at the Society.

What else could the Society do to hide from its unsavory past? It could change its name. In 1984 a supposedly new agency appeared on the scene. It was called MSB. We have been told that those letters actually stand for nothing. The new name is MSB. Yet, most publicity gives the name this way—"MSB, formerly the Minneapolis Society for the Blind." 3M never has to explain what its name means. IDS never has to explain its. Why should they? They have no identity problem. MSB does.

If blind people had become disenchanted with MSB and had become successful in finding training elsewhere, what was MSB to do for clients? A new market had to be found. Low vision! No more blindness! A brand new area, where people's sight can be improved through the use of high priced gadgetry. MSB has made a desperate attempt to sell this low vision idea to the state agency so that clients' low vision services could be paid for just as rehabilitation services had been.

But the state wouldn't bite. MSB has now gone to Hennepin County, complaining that it needs a contract to provide emergency-type rehabilitation services to blind people—because the state agency cannot offer such services. The county has signed a short-term contract—which, we believe, will not be renewed when it is learned that the state does, indeed, fund all of the services blind people need, and that in fact MSB has misled the county in order to open a new funding source for its low vision program. Citizens aren't going to be happy about paying for services for the blind through their state and

federal taxes, and through their property taxes to the county as well. MSB may have believed that working with the county would be easier than dealing with the state agency since the county would of necessity regard MSB as the expert. Thus, MSB could establish its own eligibility criteria.

There is another reason why MSB may feel a need to develop a new source of clients and funding. In an attempt to upgrade rehabilitation services for the blind in Minnesota, we (the organized blind) have worked to pass legislation requiring the state agency to promulgate a rule detailing all services available—eligibility, standards for contracting agencies, and the whole body of information we need in order to know what services we can expect from our agency. It has been a lengthy process, and several drafts of the rule have been proposed. One of the early versions (which was totally unacceptable) contained the requirement for NAC accreditation, did not mention the word "blind," and emphasized low vision and restoration services—just to name a few of its shortcomings. Obviously MSB had been hard at work on the rule writers.

However, Federationists did not stand still. We undertook to persuade a number of officials that that particular draft would not meet specifications in terms of resolving problems the rule was intended to deal with. The most recent draft is much improved: No more NAC; "blind" is back; low vision and restoration services have been relegated to their appropriate priority level; and the standards included are those which we the blind developed. MSB has probably read the writing on the wall. Its habitual behavior of manipulation,



intimidation, flimflam, and downright dishonesty will not bring back the steady flow of clients and dollars from the state.

Who won the proxy fight? One general comment is possible. The states of all parties involved in the 1979 struggle has changed. NAC, with its new personnel, is attempting to alter its approach and take a less confrontive stance than in the days of Bleecker. NAC, too, longs for a new image. A struggle to persuade Federation leaders to cease criticism of NAC has been under way for some time now. As to whether there has been any substantive change in NAC and its standards for dealing with the blind, the jury is still out.

MSB has almost left blindness. It has almost fled from the field, moving into the business of dispensing low vision devices. Its former position of supremacy and power has been blown away. Jane Pazlar, the MSB chief executive officer, refuses to appear before the organized blind at conventions—always some excuse. But, then, can you really blame her? What could she say? And about what since she knows little or nothing about blindness?

The most outstanding result of the MSB/NFB proxy fight is what has happened to blind people ourselves. I suppose we were all a little frightened in the proxy campaign—wondering whether we should even undertake such an overwhelming task, doubtful as to any success we might have. Now, however, there can no longer be any doubt whatsoever. We have proved to ourselves and to the rest of the world, including NAC and MSB, that we can take on the established agencies and win. Our standing in the community is higher than ever before, and we have

replaced MSB and NAC as the authority on blindness.

People don't very often ask anymore: "What is the National Federation of the Blind?" They know. And they know also that the Federation is the organization which is truly in touch with blind people.

As a result of our ultimate victory in the proxy campaign blind people have learned that there really is widespread support among the sighted population for our independence and acceptance as first-class citizens. It was to MSB's advantage to keep the blind in the background—helpless, powerless, and unnoticed. It was to our benefit to emerge—free from agency control, with choices for our lives (among which we will decide), and with a fuller understanding of our own potential as normal people. It no longer matters what MSB and NAC believe about Federation philosophy and Federation policy. We can sell those to the sighted public. Perhaps one day, when they no longer have a vested interest in keeping us down, MSB and NAC will join with us. Until then, though, we're on our way and making progress. Our greatest success has been in learning to deal with agencies by removing them as the most important factor in our lives. We can go much farther by working on public attitudes; and as expectations for blind people on the part of the public increase, we can force the agencies either to shape up and come into the modern age or go "play in another sandbox."

The proxy business was only a small skirmish in a tiny battle of a much greater war. It was important for indicating to the blind of the country that



we have unlimited potential and that we have far greater resources for handling our lives than anyone (especially we) ever realized. We have leadership with

the wisdom to understand the difference between a battle and a war, so we will keep on fighting until the war has been won and our goals achieved.

### NFB MUSIC COMMITTEE REACHES OUT

For several years the National Federation of the Blind has had a Music Committee. Some of the people who take part in the activities of the Committee enjoy music and participate for the pleasure it gives them. Others are interested in music as a profession. Accordingly, a subgroup of the Committee is called the Professional/Serious Section. Its activities and purposes are indicated by its name. Recently Mary Brunoli, Chairperson of the Music Committee, and Julie Vogt, Editor of the Newsletter of the Professional/Serious Section, asked the Braille Monitor to carry the following material, which is aimed at those who wish to apply for positions in the field of music:

106, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411. She will work with you and with JOB for the best possible results.

Mary Brunoli, Chairperson  
NFB Music Committee

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#### QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name, Address, Residence Phone, Work Phone:

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2. Formal Education—High School, College. List any degrees:

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3. Musical Education—College. If other, what musical educational experience have

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Dear Applicant:

The purpose of this questionnaire is: (1) to assist in describing and clarifying your musical goals, and (2) to assist Job Opportunities for the Blind (JOB) in possibly helping individuals in finding gainful musical employment. Please send all responses to Miss Julie Vogt, Plymouth Avenue Townhouse Apartments, 1414 Plymouth Avenue, North, Apt.

you had?

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4. What natural musical ability do you have. Do you play by ear?

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5. Do you feel that you have either natural talents or work experience in music which could be considered material for applied college credits, i.e., the university without walls?

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6. Name current employer, even if employment is not related to music.

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7. Have you ever been employed in the music field? If so, please list most recent time period involved and give duties.

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8. What is your musical specialty: Instrumental, vocal, other. Please explain. If instrumental, please name instrument.

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9. Name the category of music in what you are involved: country western, jazz, etc.

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10. List chief accomplishments since beginning your musical career. List awards for such achievements.

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11. Composition: Are you a composer? In what category—classical, folk, rock, gospel, religious, jazz, blues, other?

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12. Have you ever recorded or functioned as a session musician?

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13. Have you copyrighted? How recently?

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14. Music Writing: Can you transcribe music Braille? If not, have you devised a music Braille method of your own? What method of music Braille do you use? Explain if it is Hand-Over-Hand or more than two staves. Are you equipped to be a teacher of Braille music?

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15. If you are neither a teacher nor a

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musician, what is your field of work experience in connection with the music industry—i.e., disc jockey, musical attorney, music therapist, publicist, recording, promotional, etc.

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16. Would you relocate to accept more suitable musical or other employment?

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### STATE VOWS TO ENFORCE INSURANCE LAW FOR BLIND

by Joe Kennedy  
News Gazette Staff Writer

(Reprinted from the September 22, 1985, Champaign-Urbana, News Gazette.)

The state will vigorously enforce a new law that prohibits insurance companies from discriminating against the blind, an official with the Illinois Department of Insurance said Saturday.

The law, which was signed two weeks ago and goes into effect January 1, forbids insurance companies from refusing to sell life, accident, and health insurance to the blind and from raising their rates for such coverage solely because an applicant is blind or partially blind.

"We mean to enforce the mandate of

that statute," Lloyd Rice told the Illinois affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind, meeting at the Howard Johnson's Hotel in Champaign. Rice is the department's associate director of health and life insurance.

The insurance industry has discriminated against the blind for years because it believes they are more accident prone than the general population, said Peggy Pinder, Second Vice President of the Federation.

But there is no statistical evidence for that claim, she said. Blind people, using canes or dog guides, can safely move about without endangering themselves or others, she said.

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## THE SHOESHINE, BLINDNESS, AND THE NFB

by Marc Maurer

(This article appeared in the fall, 1985, Braille Spectator, the official publication of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland.)

The other morning I stopped at a shoe shine stand for a polish. While I sat the shoeshine man and I discussed old music. We both agreed that it was much better than the more modern product. Then we talked about politics—always a good topic in Maryland. During our conversation the shoeshine man was shining and polishing away. A normal shoe-shine was about to come to a close. Except it wasn't.

When I stepped from the chair the man told me that there would be no charge. He said that he was blind in one eye himself and that he had wondered if he would become totally blind. He said it was the policy of the house not to charge the blind.

My choices were simple. I could try to pay the man, thus preventing him from giving me charity. I could argue the matter. I could explain that blindness is not the tragedy he believes it to be. Probably the result would be to make him angry. Or I could accept the charity. I could understand that he felt sorry for me. I could recognize that we make progress each day, but the real problem

of blindness is the misunderstanding in the public mind—the misunderstanding of the shoeshine man.

I must find a way to change his mind. I cannot go each week and get a shine from him. I cannot demand that he give me charity. Therefore, I am prevented from getting my shine at his stand. I have less opportunity than the sighted. My options are limited. This is all because of charity and kindness.

I hope and believe that we, through our efforts in the NFB, will win the battle of understanding. I am sure that we will find a way for people to realize that blindness does not require free shoeshines and that equality requires the individual to pay for service given. I am sure that one day charity will not be used to limit the opportunities of the blind. That is why we have the National Federation of the Blind. We must be sensitive to the need of others to help us. We need and want the help of our sighted neighbors. However, we must also be sensitive to the need we have to help others. Full equality requires the blind to help their sighted neighbors. Furthermore, we must be sensitive to the need for us not to be limited by the wish of our sighted neighbors to custodialize or dominate us—even in the name of charity.

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## RECIPE

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### OVEN-ICED OATMEAL CAKE

by Harlene Stone

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(Note: Harlene Stone is one of the leaders of the National Federation of the Blind of Arizona.)

Pour together and let stand 1 cup oatmeal and 1 1/3 cups warm water.

Cream together 1/2 cup shortening and 1 cup sugar. Add 1 cup brown sugar. Cream. Add 2 eggs.

Sift together 1 1/3 cups sifted flour, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 1/2 teaspoon

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nutmeg, 1 teaspoon soda, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, and add. Add 1 teaspoon vanilla and oatmeal-water mixture. Pour into lightly oiled 13 x 9 inch pan. Bake 30 to 40 minutes at 400 degrees. Remove from the oven and top with a mixture of 6 tablespoons soft margarine, 3/4 cup brown sugar, 4 tablespoons milk, 1 cup coconut, and 1 1/2 cups nutmeg. Spread evenly over top of cake. Place under broiler until brown and bubbly.

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### MONITOR MINIATURES \* \* \* \* \*

#### \*\*Minnesota Move-A-Thon:

Peggy Chong writes:

We have just concluded our fourth annual Move-A-Thon. It was quite successful. Now we have \$4,100 in, and it's still climbing. One of our best ways to keep it climbing is prizes. This year the prizes were a t-shirt if \$50 was turned in before the deadline; a

baseball for \$100; our grand prize: a night for two at the Leamington Hotel. Thirty-three out of forty-six persons turning in money earned a t-shirt. We have no problem getting nonmembers to turn in money. We believe this is due to the prize system.

#### \*\*Kentucky Convention:

Mary Beaven writes:

In its thirty-eighth annual state

convention held in Owensboro, Kentucky, on September 13th and 14th, 1985, the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky elected the following officers: Betty Niceley, President; T.V. Cranmer, First Vice President; Robert Page, Second Vice President; Robbie McClave, Third Vice President; Ed McDonald, Recording Secretary; Mary Beaven, Corresponding Secretary; Cathy Jackson, Treasurer; and Orville Phillips, Chaplin.

Six resolutions were passed dealing with affiliate building, the organization's commitment to use its energies toward making more Braille available, and a support resolution for the vending proposal which recently came out of the Governor's office. Our Owensboro Chapter did a marvelous job in hosting the event.

At our banquet awards were received by both Betty Niceley and our Frankfort Chapter for their outstanding leadership in the promotion of Federationism during the past year. The 1986 convention will be held in Covington.

#### **\*\*Mobility Workshop:**

Federation affiliates are conducting an ever increasing number of activities to improve the quality of life of the blind. Recently Fred Schroeder, national board member and President of the NFB of New Mexico, sent the following letter to the blind of the state:

Dear Members and Friends:

As blind people, there is no skill more important for us to have than the ability to travel safely and independently wherever we wish to go. Many of us have not had the opportunity to receive adequate cane travel training,

while others of us have had training but have let our travel skills grow rusty.

For this reason the National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico will be holding its first cane travel workshop to share ideas and techniques which will enable all of us to become more effective travelers. The seminar will be held on Saturday, October 19, 1985, in the Sandia Room of the Rio Grande Inn (1015 Rio Grande Boulevard, N.W.) in Albuquerque. The seminar will run from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Included in the seminar will be suggestions on basic cane technique as well as shared experiences on how to handle tough situations. In addition, there will be a chance to work individually on your cane technique and practice some of these skills around the hotel.

I hope to see you on October 19th.

#### **\*\*Cookbooks:**

The National Braille Press has asked us to carry the following announcement:

Brighten up your breakfast table with moist blueberry muffins. Then, try your tastebuds on some tasty spare ribs, followed by mouthwatering peanut butter cookies for dessert. These basic, nutritious recipes can be found in Our Special Cookbook along with many more--and all for just \$2.00. Two additional cookbooks: From Our Kitchen to Yours 1983 and 1984 contain countless people pleasers and cost just \$3.00 each. To order, send your check to National Braille Press, Inc., 88 St. Stephen Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02115. Braille only.

#### **\*\*American Legion Magazine:**

We have been asked to carry the fol-

lowing announcement:

"The American Legion, an organization of 2.6 million military-service veterans, has for several years produced its monthly publication, The American Legion Magazine, on flexible records. The magazine contains articles on subjects of current national interest to all Americans and information concerning veterans benefits and legislation. "The Talking American Legion Magazine" is available on a no-cost subscription basis to all American veterans and to institutions including public libraries, nursing homes, and veterans care facilities. Additional information may be obtained by writing to: The Talking American Legion Magazine, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206."

**\*\*Braille Translator:**

Jacksonville, Illinois, Journal Courier, September 22, 1985:

### **NFB Computer Program Converts Text Into Braille**

The National Federation of the Blind, Baltimore, Md., has announced the release of the computer program used at the National Center for the Blind for the production of Grade II Braille.

The program was designed to make it easier to convert text entered onto a computer with a word processing program into Grade II Braille. Typically a sighted operator can convert a document into Braille after about 30 minutes of practice using fewer than a dozen commands.

The program is compatible with text files produced by Word Star and other word processing programs which produce print image files. It has been in use

at the Center for more than three years and will run on many different kinds of computers.

A license to use the software, including Discette and Documentation, may be purchased along with ongoing support and automatic new release upgrade services.

The program is supported and maintained for the NFB by Waverly Financial Systems, 2500 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, Md. 21218. For more information, write to the above address or call 301-243-6859.

**\*\*Elections and Gender:**

At recent conventions a number of new state presidents were elected. Ron Matias succeeded Joe Money as President of the National Federation of the Blind of Indiana; Priscilla Ferris succeeded Phil Oliver as President of the National Federation of the Blind of Massachusetts; Roberta Jensen succeeded Lee Jones as President of the National Federation of the Blind of Arizona; Connie Leblond succeeded Bill Higgins as President of the National Federation of the Blind of Maine; Pearl Duval succeeded Jim O'Neill as President of the National Federation of the Blind of Vermont; and David Arocho succeeded David Stayer as President of the National Federation of the Blind of New York. Congratulations to the new Presidents. While we are discussing state presidents, it might be noted that twenty-five of the states have women presidents, and twenty-six (don't forget D.C.) have men. No gender gap in the Federation.

**\*\*Congressional Assistant:**

Judy Sanders has been employed to work as an assistant to Congressman Jerry Sikorski of Minnesota. She writes: "I

have taken a position as Staff Aide with Congressman Jerry Sikorski in his district office. I began work October 16, 1985. I obtained this position because Congressman Sikorski knows the NFB and asked us to find somebody to work in his office. He read my testimony in support of the Fair Insurance Coverage Act and decided that I might fit his needs. There can be no doubt that this job placement goes to the NFB."

**\*\*For Sale:**

We have been asked to carry the following announcement:

"Want to sell a Sanyo stereo system. Includes AM/FM radio, cassette and eight track recorder, turntable, two speaker cabinet, and dust cover. Approximately two years old. Price (including UPS shipping) \$290. Also, a Sanyo duplicator, dual cassette like new. Can play or record stereo tapes along with dubbing from one cassette to the other. \$160. Includes UPS shipping. Two years old. Used very little. Please make checks to Raymond Rokita, 308 Van Buren, Apartment 192-E, Jackson, Michigan 49201. Braille or cassette letters preferred."

**\*\*Holiday:**

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday Commission has requested that we call to the attention of Federationists the first celebration of the King Holiday, January 20, 1986. The Commission quotes Coretta Scott King, the widow of Martin Luther King, Jr.: "The theme of 'Living the Dream' calls for a day for love, not hate, understanding, not anger, for peace, not war."

**\*\*Name Needed:**

Ed Bryant asks that we carry the following:

"We are the Diabetic Division of the National Federation of the Blind. Our inception was accomplished at the 1985 NFB national convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

"We are looking for a name for our fledgling newsletter. I encourage you to send me a suggestion for a name. Names will be given to a committee at our 1986 national convention. The committee will select the best name and the name will be matched up with the person who sent it. The winner will receive a prize of \$100.

"The only requirement is that the newsletter name must include the word 'Diabetic.' Names should be sent to: Ed Bryant, Vice President, NFB Diabetic Division, 111-A Stadium Boulevard, North, Columbia, Missouri 65203; (314) 445-1928."

**\*\*Honored:**

Jan Byrd, wife of NFB board member Ronald Byrd, recently wrote about an honor which Ron received during the first week of October. She said: "Last week the Dallas NAACP honored him with the Community Service Award. He was chosen over seventeen other prominent leaders, and his work with the National Federation of the Blind in the capacity of Past President of the Dallas Chapter and now national board member helped to tip the scales in his favor. NFB is getting to be a household word in Dallas."

**\*\*Blind Merchants to Meet:**

Larry Posont, President of the Merchants Division, says:

"The Merchants Division announces its



spring meeting to be held in Salt Lake City, Utah, April 11 - 13, 1986, at the Radisson Hotel. All blind business people and those considering a career in business are invited and encouraged to come and participate. Friday, April 11, will be taken up with touring vending facilities in the area. Saturday's program will deal partly with matters of interest to all blind businessmen and women and with matters specific to the Randolph-Sheppard program. As usual, we will hold our banquet Saturday evening and our business meeting Sunday morning.

"For reservations write the Radisson Hotel, 161 West 6th South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84101; or phone 801-521-7373. Be sure to specify that you will be attending the NFB Merchants Division meeting. Room rates are \$42.00 a room plus tax, whether you have one or four persons in the room. Plan to come to Salt Lake City for this meeting. You will be glad you did."

#### **\*\*Comets and Children:**

President Jernigan asked Duane Gerstenberger to write a miniature about a new arrival in Illinois. Here is the result:

"While some earthlings will remember 1985 as the year Halley's Comet reappeared to our planet on its 75-year cycle, others—most notably Steve and Peg Benson of Illinois—will remember 1985 as the year Patrick Owen Benson made his initial appearance. First observed by his fellow earthlings at 12:40 p.m. on October 10, father, National Board Member and Illinois affiliate President Steve Benson, mother, attorney Peg Benson, and Patrick Owen all are reported in A-OK condition."

#### **\*\*New Grandchild:**

Bob and Pat Eschbach report the arrival Tuesday, September 24, 1985, of a new grandchild, Ian Michael Cunnynggham. Born at 8:05 a.m., Ian Michael weighed over seven pounds and was twenty-one inches long. Ian Michael's mother, Mary (daughter of Bob and Pat Eschbach) reports that he gained eleven ounces in the first week. Such vitality is only to be expected from the Eschbach clan. As Federationists know, Bob is the past President of the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio and a member of the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind. He also holds a supervisory position with the Ohio state rehabilitation program. Pat, among other things, has during recent years been in charge of the food operations in the Presidential Suite at national conventions and has earned universal commendation for her performance.

#### **\*\*Elected:**

On October 6, 1985, the following people were elected to office in the NFB of Massachusetts: President, Priscilla Ferris; First Vice President, Peter Slowkowski; Second Vice President, Dolores Fleming; Treasurer, Cecile Paice; Recording Secretary, Paul Burkhardt; Corresponding Secretary, Dennis Polselli; and Legislative Officer, Albert Sten.

#### **\*\*Married:**

June Grant, President of the Chattanooga Chapter, writes:

"You might be interested in knowing that two of our Chattanooga Federation members were married September 5th in Chattanooga. They are Marquis Grant and

Kay Reno Grant. Marquis has been a long-time member of the Federation, and Kay joined in May. They met at the May meeting of the NFB."

**\*\*Honored:**

On October 15, 1985, Marc Maurer, President of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland, received recognition for his work to promote the civil rights of the blind in Maryland. Delegate Elijah E. Cummings, Chairman of the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus, made a presentation in a political gathering of over 500 people, in which he described Marc's achievements and recognized the progress of the National Federation of the Blind. The plaque reads:

**Presented to  
MARC MAURER**

**For Your Tremendous Efforts  
In the Struggle for  
Equality and Justice  
for the Blind  
and Handicapped of Maryland**

**By  
Elijah E. Cummings  
Delegate  
October 15, 1985**

**\*\*Proclaims:**

On October 1, 1985, the Mayor of Erie, Pennsylvania, issued a proclamation, which said in part:

Whereas, the National Federation of

the Blind, founded in 1940, is the largest organization of the blind in the nation, having local chapters in almost every community of any size;...

Now, Therefore, I, Louis J. Tullio, Mayor of the City of Erie, Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim the month of October, 1985, as

**National Federation of the Blind  
Month**

in Erie and I urge the citizens of the Erie area to recognize and support the Erie County Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind in its efforts to generate more public awareness of the blind, and to congratulate them for this contribution to our community.

LOUIS J. TULLIO, Mayor

**\*\*Correspondence Chess:**

We have been asked to carry the following announcement:

The 1986-87 U.S. Correspondence Chess Championship for the Blind will start during January, 1986. Entry fee is \$3.00 to cover the cost of a pairings cassette and tournament administration. Chess move transmission is in Braille. However, provisions have been made for nonBraille users. They may compete in the tournament on cassette if they provide the cassette. Submit all entries to: Gintautas Burba, Postal Tournament Director, U.S. Braille Chess Association, 30 Snell Street, Brockton, Massachusetts 02401.



